

Bob Brownbridge

The Six-Minute Solution: A Reading Fluency Program (Intermediate Level)

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Grades 3-6

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Introduction

Nothing is more painful and frustrating to a teacher than to hear a student arduously read a sentence word by word, seeming to have to physically drag himself or herself to the end of the sentence. As educators, we have all heard students read in this manner time and again and have wanted to do something—anything—to help these disfluent students become good readers.

Six-Minute Solution Intermediate will help students do just that. This research-based, highly effective instructional procedure for students in grades 3–6 builds reading fluency in only six minutes of the instructional day. For an overview of the instructional format, see the table below.

SIX-MINUTE SOLUTION INTERMEDIATE INSTRUCTIONAL FORMAT		
Time	Materials	Procedures
1 minute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Timer ■ One portfolio for each set of student partners that contains: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Two copies of the same <i>Grade-Level Practice Passage</i> (laminated or placed inside plastic sleeves). b. Two copies of the <i>Fluency Record</i> or <i>Fluency Graph</i> (one for each student). c. One dry-erase marker and erasing cloth inside a zip-per-lock plastic bag. 	Get Ready <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teacher announces that fluency timings will begin. ■ Student partners remove fluency materials from the partnership's portfolio. ■ Partners record today's date on their respective <i>Fluency Record</i> or <i>Fluency Graph</i>. ■ Teacher monitors to ensure students are ready to begin their timings.
1 minute		Partner 1 Reads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teacher sets the timer for 1 minute and says, "Begin." ■ Partner 1 reads until the timer sounds. ■ Partner 2 marks Partner 1 reading errors and stopping point on his/her copy of the <i>Practice Passage</i>.
1 minute		Partner 2 Gives Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Partner 2 tells Partner 1 how many words he/she read, the number of errors he/she made, and does the error-correction procedure (see <i>Chapter 4</i>). ■ Partner 1 records the numbers on his/her <i>Fluency Record</i> or <i>Fluency Graph</i>. ■ Partner 2 wipes off the markings on his/her <i>Practice Passage</i> and gives the marker to Partner 1.
1 minute		Partner 2 Reads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teacher again sets the timer for 1 minute and says, "Begin." ■ Partner 2 reads the same <i>Practice Passage</i> to Partner 1 until the timer sounds. ■ Partner 1 marks Partner 2 reading errors and stopping point on his/her copy of the <i>Practice Passage</i>.

1 minute		Partner 1 Gives Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Partner 1 tells Partner 2 how many words he/she read, the number of errors he/she made, and does the error-correction procedure (see <i>Chapter 4</i>). ■ Partner 2 records the numbers on his/her <i>Fluency Record</i> or <i>Fluency Graph</i>. ■ Partner 1 wipes off the markings on his/her <i>Practice Passage</i>.
1 minute		Students Put Away Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ One partner returns the copies of the <i>Practice Passage</i>, <i>Fluency Record</i> or <i>Fluency Graph</i>, dry-erase marker, and erasing cloth in the zipper-lock plastic bag to the partner portfolio.

Struggling readers as well as good readers benefit from *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*'s daily fluency practice. Struggling readers gain fluency first at the word level and then at the passage level, while competent readers are challenged to read more expressive texts that are increasingly more difficult and sophisticated. All students benefit from fluency practice because as they encounter more challenging texts, they need to continue to grow as fluent readers.

Rereading to Build Fluency

As the saying goes, "Practice makes perfect"—whether it's shooting basketballs, playing the piano, or processing text in a smooth, efficient, and accurate manner. The benefits of repeated readings of the same passage to build reading fluency have been well documented in many research studies (Levy, Nicholls, & Kroshen, 1993; Meyer & Felton, 1999; Samuels, 1979). *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* helps students succeed at reading fluency using an instructional model that is based on repeated-reading research and partnering students with closely matched instructional and fluency levels. Research supports the fact that students' reading skills improve when they work with peers in structured reading activities (Greenwood, Delquadri, & Hall, 1989; Rosenshine & Meister, 1994; and Stevens, Madden, Slavin, & Famish, 1987).

Partnering Students to Build Fluency

In *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*, students' current instructional reading levels are determined and then students are placed in fluency partnerships. In these partnerships, one student reads the passage to his/her partner for one minute while the partner tracks the words read correctly as well as the reading errors. Partners then switch roles, with each partner charting his/her own progress. The entire procedure takes only six minutes.

Decoding & Fluency

Experts may disagree as to what exactly is the best approach to teach students how to read, but they are in agreement as to what good reading "sounds" like. According to Carnine, Silbert, and Kame'enui (1997), fluency is "reading smoothly, easily, and quickly." In order to read fluently, the reader must be able to decode the vast majority of words automatically, with approximately 95 percent accuracy. However, although there is a clear link between fluency and decoding skills, fluency practice alone will not improve a student's

decoding skills. Any underlying decoding problems must also be addressed either prior to or in conjunction with fluency practice.

Comprehension & Fluency

Research also shows a high correlation between reading *comprehension* and reading *fluency* (Farstrup & Samuels, 2002; Foorman & Mehta, 2002; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). Reading comprehension suffers when students lack fluency. If a student is focusing his/her cognitive energies on word decoding and recognition, those energies are not available for comprehension. In the words of Farstrup and Samuels (2002), fluency consists of “optical, perceptual, syntactic, and semantic cycles, each melting into the next as readers try to get meaning as efficiently as possible using minimal time and energy.”

Independent Reading & Fluency

Fluent readers generally find reading to be a pleasurable activity; as a result, they read more. When the amount of time spent on independent reading increases, there are accompanying gains in reading-related skills. As students read more, they increase not only their comprehension but also their vocabulary, background knowledge, decoding, and fluency skills. The “Matthew effect”—a term coined by reading researcher Dr. Keith Stanovich—refers to the effect that in reading, as in other areas of life, “the rich get richer while the poor get poorer” (Stanovich, 1986).

Work Completion & Fluency

Fluent readers will be better able to complete both class assignments and homework. This is significant when you consider the amount of reading assigned to upper elementary, middle school, and high school students. As an example: Student A, a fluent reader, is able to read an average of 180 correct words per minute (cwpm); Student B, a struggling reader, has an average fluency rate of 60 cwpm. Both students are assigned the same amount of reading. Student A, with an appropriate fluency rate, is able to complete the assignment in two hours. Student B, who reads at only one-third the rate of Student A, needs six hours to complete the same assignment.

Reading Achievement & Fluency Practice

Although the National Assessment of Educational Progress (Pinnell, Piluski, Wixson, Campbell, Gough, & Beatty, 1995) found that 44 percent of fourth graders were not fluent readers, research shows that educators have the knowledge and tools to affect this problem. After analyzing many fluency studies, the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) reported that fluency can be taught and that guided, repeated, oral reading procedures are “appropriate and valuable avenues for increasing reading fluency and overall reading achievement.” Skilled readers read words quickly, correctly, and without hesitation. Students who have not become fluent readers continue to plod slowly through each sentence without experiencing the joy of quick, automatic, fluent reading. By its very nature, fluency practice supports comprehension. It provides a skill-building activity that enables students to move quickly through text. As students build fluency through rereading, they amass a larger reading vocabulary. As they begin to read with automaticity, their cognitive

attention can be focused on the text's meaning instead of on word identification. The National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) found that repeated oral reading, accompanied by feedback and guidance, resulted in significant reading achievement.

Six-Minute Solution Intermediate uses both of these research-validated components—repeated readings of the same passage and oral feedback from peers—to build fluency.

Six Simple Steps for Getting Started

The *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* partner fluency model can be easily implemented in a variety of settings. The following is a list of the steps needed to get started and an estimate of how long each step will take.

Step 1. Assessment (Chapter 1)

Estimated Time 1-2 hours

- Give each student a one minute timing on a grade level passage to determine oral fluency rate.
- Give each student a test to determine instructional reading level—San Diego Quick, silent reading test or a passage placement accuracy test.

Step 2. Select Fluency Partners and Instructional Groups (Chapter 2)

Estimated Time 1 hour

- Using a class roster, list students by fluency score and then by instructional reading level.
- Assign partners by ranking. For example, students ranked #1 and #2 would be partners and students ranked #3 and #4 would be partners. Partners must be closely matched (fluency rates should be within 10-15 words of each other).
- Designate the stronger of the two as partnership #1 and the other #2.

Step 3. Introduce the Fluency Concept (Chapter 3)

Estimated Time 20-30 minutes

- Teacher demonstrates whisper reading the sample passage, tracking while reading, underlining unknown words and marking the last word read when the timer sounds.
- Teacher demonstrates totaling correct number of words read and graphing.
- Students whisper read passage for one minute, figure out the number of correct words read and graph. Procedure is repeated for a second minute.
- Students compare number of cwpm on each of their timings. Teacher leads class discussion on the benefits of repeated reading.

Step 4. Establish Partner Behavior (Chapter 4)

Estimated Time 10-20 minutes

- Teacher models and discusses cooperative and respectful partnerships.
- Teacher selects a student partner to demonstrate correct partner behavior during reading—"lean in and whisper read."
- Teacher demonstrates giving polite feedback to the partner.

- Teacher demonstrates gently correcting errors using tell and repeat method.
- Teacher states “No Arguing” rule and demonstrates how arguing wastes time.

Step 5. Train Students in the Partnership Model (Chapter 5)

Estimated Time 20-30 minutes

- Teacher demonstrates partner procedure with a student.
- Teacher sets timer for one minute and instructs all partner 1s to read and all partner 2s to follow along and underline errors.
- After the timer sounds, teacher instructs all partner 2s to give feedback to all partner 1s—total words read, number of errors, and correct words per minute.
- Teacher instructs all partner 1s to graph or record their score.
- Teacher instructs students to change roles and get ready for the second timing. Students repeat procedure for a second minute.
- Procedure is repeated. **Note:** Teacher should walk around the room and monitor carefully at all times.

Step 6. Train Students to Manage Materials (Chapter 6)

Estimated Time 10-15 minutes

- Teacher shows students where portfolios and passages are kept.
- Teacher demonstrates choosing new passages and filing old passages.
- Teacher demonstrates storing the pen, cloth or sponge.

Sample Schedule

The following is a sample of a weekly (5 day) schedule for the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* partner fluency model. Notice that the first day of the week includes an accuracy check and the last day of the week may include optional comprehension and writing activities.

<i>Six-Minute Solution Intermediate</i> Sample Schedule	
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ All partnerships have new <i>Practice Passages</i>. Partners preview the entire passage for accuracy by whisper-reading or silently reading, underlining unknown words. Teacher monitors and identifies any words unknown to either partner.<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Option 1: No timings on Mondays. Have partners use the allotted six minutes for previewing <i>Practice Passages</i>.– Option 2: Allow extra time (10–15 minutes) on Mondays. Have partners first preview their <i>Practice Passage</i> for accuracy. Then, conduct partner fluency practice during the allotted six minutes.
Tuesday through Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ <i>Six-Minute Solution Intermediate</i> procedure: Fluency practice.
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Partners turn in the week's <i>Practice Passage</i> and select a new one for the following week.<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Option: Extend the amount of time to incorporate student practice with comprehension or summary writing strategies. Partners can use the current <i>Practice Passage</i> for these optional activities before turning it in and selecting a new passage for the following week. See <i>Chapter 8</i> for suggestions.

Program Overview

Six-Minute Solution Intermediate can be easily implemented in a variety of educational settings by following six easy steps, each of which is discussed in the first several chapters.

Chapter 1: Assessments

Assessment is critical in determining student fluency partnerships and in selecting the appropriate reading level of *Practice Passages*. This chapter provides step-by-step procedures for assessing students' oral reading fluency rates and instructional reading levels. It also includes recommended grade-level oral reading fluency rates.

Chapter 2: Selecting Fluency Partners and Instructional Groups

Careful selection of student fluency partnerships is critical to the success of *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*. This chapter describes the procedures for selecting partners based on assessment data that has been collected via spreadsheet software or manual sorting. We also offer suggestions for program implementation in different configurations: entire classrooms, small groups, special-needs classes, intervention programs, and cross-age tutoring programs.

Chapter 3: Introducing the Fluency Concept

This chapter provides the necessary steps for introducing the concept of repeated reading to students.

Chapter 4: Establishing Partner Behavior

Training students to work in a cooperative manner and to provide polite feedback to each other are the focuses of this chapter.

Chapter 5: Training Students in the Partnership Model

Taking the time to properly train students in *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* procedures will ensure that the program runs smoothly. This chapter discusses how to teach students to correctly carry out fluency procedures.

Chapter 6: Managing Materials

Well-organized program materials that are easily accessible to students will assist in the establishment of effective fluency routines. In this chapter, we include ideas for initial implementation and ongoing management of materials.

Chapter 7: Student Progress and Record Keeping

It is essential to monitor individual student progress and to make instructional decisions based on that progress. This chapter provides examples of how to interpret fluency data, adjust reading goals accordingly, and support students who are not making adequate progress.

Chapter 8: Comprehension and Writing Strategies

Although *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* is primarily a fluency-building program, its *Practice Passages* may be used to instruct students in a variety of comprehension strategies as well. This chapter offers suggestions for teaching students how to summarize, paraphrase, retell, describe, sequence, compare, solve problems, and determine cause and effect. *Practice Passages* may also be used as models for teaching students the writing form of short summary. Examples of paragraph frames are included.

Conclusion: More Than Six Minutes a Day

With the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* fluency partnership model, students can increase their oral reading fluency by practicing for only six minutes a day on a regular basis. There will be times, however, when teachers will need to devote more than six minutes a day to fluency practice. The *Conclusion* outlines some situations that may require implementing extended fluency practice.

Assessment

The *Assessment* section includes the following components:

Assessment Passages

The *Assessment Passage* set consists of one passage per grade-level readability (grades 1–6), for a total of six passages. *Assessment Passages* can be used for two purposes:

1. To obtain a student's fluency score on a grade-level passage.
2. To determine a student's instructional level.

Using the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* Assessment Passages. Consult these directions for assessing cwpm, determining reading instructional level, collecting pretest/posttest data, and determining student progress.

San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability

- *San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability* (includes Teacher Record and Student Form). This assessment may be used to determine students' instructional reading levels.

Fluency Building Sheets

Practice Passages

Practice Passages are organized by Flesch-Kincaid readability level in sets of five for grades 1–6 (total of 150). The nonfiction, informational *Practice Passages* focus on science, social studies, history, and biographical topics. We use nonfiction passages for two important reasons:

1. Struggling readers often lack general background knowledge in topics that *Practice Passages* cover. Students benefit from fluency practice with reading material that offers general-knowledge information.

2. It is easier to “hide” readability level in nonfiction material. To improve reading fluency, a student needs to practice rereading passages at his/her *instructional* reading level, which, in many cases, is below chronological grade-level placement.

The *Practice Passages* within each grade level are not thematic or dependent on one another. **Note:** While *Practice Passages* are available for grades 1 and 2 readability, their content is appropriate for older, rather than primary, students.

Automatic Word Lists

These lists include words that are most often encountered in written English. The words are grouped in sets of 25 and are repeated three times within each list.

Fluency Building Sheets: Vowels and Vowel Combinations, Prefixes, and Suffixes

In order to fluently read multisyllabic words, students must be able to quickly break words into decodable chunks. Knowing vowel combinations and word parts automatically is a necessity for advanced decoding. Students who need to develop this preskill will benefit from practicing with these fluency building sheets.

Appendix

The *Appendix* includes the following components:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- *Fluency Assessment Report*
- *Initial Assessment Record* (to rank and partner students)
- *Fluency Record* (data-collection form students use to record their cwpm scores)
- *Fluency Graphs 1, 2, and 3* (data-collection forms students use to graph their cwpm progress). Choose the graph that best represents the current cwpm and goal cwpm for a student.
- Three *Six-Minute Solution* field tests (for readers who would like more information about the implementation and validation of *Six-Minute Solution* procedures).
- Blackline masters for introducing fluency concepts to students:
 - Summary Paragraph Frame 1
 - Summary Paragraph Frame 2
 - What Is Reading Fluency?
 - Why Is Reading Fluency Important?

Assessments

Assessment is an important step to implementing *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*. Determining students' reading levels helps you to select practice passages, assign student partners, and establish a baseline to measure student progress.

Materials:

- Two copies of a grade-level passage—one for the student to read from and another for the teacher to use to record total words read and errors.
Note: Every student must read the same passage for the purpose of assessment. The teacher could have a laminated copy on which to record errors and stopping point with a water based or dry erase marking pen. The teacher would then erase between students. Or the teacher could run multiple copies of the same passage and use a separate one to record errors and stopping point for each student.
- Data sheet for the teacher to record correct words per minute and timer.
- Materials to determine instructional reading level (San Diego Quick Test of Sight Word Recognition, silent reading test or a placement accuracy test.)

Estimated Time:

1–2 hours

Assess Students

The first step in implementing *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* is to determine students' oral reading fluency rates and instructional reading levels. This initial assessment will guide *Practice Passage* selection, provide data for selecting partners, and provide baseline information so that student growth can be evaluated. More specifically, the two-part assessment that follows (Assessment 1 and Assessment 2) will determine:

1. A student's **oral reading fluency rate** (i.e., correct words per minute [cwpm] reading of a *Assessment Passage* at the student's grade-level placement).
2. A student's **instructional reading level** as determined by using one of the following measures: word recognition test (*San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability*, see *Assessment*), a silent reading test or a passage placement accuracy test to indicate the level at which a student can read with 91 percent–96 percent accuracy. **Note:** If you already use an informal reading inventory, you may use this data to determine a student's instructional reading level.

We recommend that students be assessed for fluency three times a year (e.g., in September, January, and May) to ensure appropriate student progress and to validate that student partners are working well together and recording scores accurately. In addition, it is always a good idea to keep parents informed of their children's fluency levels. The *Fluency Assessment Report* (see *Appendix*) can be used for this purpose.

Students who have significant reading problems may need a more extensive assessment than is described in this program in order to determine the nature and severity of their reading problems. The more extensive assess-

ment information can either replace *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* assessments or be used in conjunction with them. Use the assessment information you gather to guide you in addressing underlying deficits in skills, such as phonemic awareness and decoding. Instruction in these important skills may be conducted prior to or along with the implementation of *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*.

Assessment 1

Oral Reading Fluency

Materials:

- One copy of an *Assessment Passage* (see *Assessment*) for the student to read at the student's grade-level placement, laminated or enclosed in a plastic sleeve. Each student in the class will read the same *Assessment Passage* individually (e.g., all sixth-grade students will read the same Level 6 *Assessment Passage*). **Note:** When listening to an individual student read, sit apart from the other students so that they are not within hearing distance. This would give them prior knowledge of the passage.
- One copy of the same laminated *Assessment Passage* on which to record each student's reading errors and stopping point. **Note:** You may wish to have a laminated copy of the same *Assessment Passage* for each student on which to permanently record reading errors and stopping point. In that case, you will need as many copies as there are students in the class.
- A digital timer or stopwatch, a marking pen, and a clipboard.

Special circumstances: When working with groups of students who read significantly below grade level, it would not be appropriate to ask them to read a grade-level *Assessment Passage*. Instead, assess remedial students with a *Assessment Passage* at their estimated reading level. Continue assessing to determine the level at which a student reads with 95 percent accuracy (i.e., 5 errors in a 100-word passage). This would be the appropriate level for a student to begin building fluency.

Estimated time:

2.5 minutes per student

Procedure:

1. Give each student the laminated copy of the grade-level *Assessment Passage* and say, "The title of this passage is _____. When I say, 'Please begin,' I would like you to start reading here (point to the first word) and read out loud quickly and carefully until the timer sounds. If you do not know a word, I will tell it to you. Are you ready?"
2. Set the timer for one minute and say, "I will start the timer when you begin reading."
3. Using a clipboard to hold the teacher copy of the *Assessment Passage*, follow along as the student reads, underlining errors. Mark a diagonal line when the timer sounds, indicating the point at which the student stopped reading. The use of the clipboard will keep the student from being distracted by any marks you may make.

4. Tell the student, “Thank you. Please return to your seat and ask _____ (the next student) to come over to read.”
5. During the interval between students, determine the total number of words the student read, subtract any errors, and note the correct words per minute (cwpm) read.
6. After all students have read the *Assessment Passage*, record their cwpm scores on the *Initial Assessment Record* (see *Appendix*).

Oral reading errors:

- Mispronunciations, unless attributed to accent or dialect.
- Words supplied by the teacher.
- Word omissions.
- Dropped word endings, unless attributed to accent or dialect.
- Substitutions, even if the word meaning is unchanged (e.g., “home” for “house”).
- Reversed order of words (e.g., “he was” for “was he”) counts as two errors.
- Mispronunciation of proper nouns counts as one error every occurrence.

Notes:

- Repetitions (e.g., “the boy, the boy”) are *not* counted as errors.
- Insertions are *not* counted as errors or as words read.

Assessment 2

Instructional Reading Level

Any of three types of assessments may be used to obtain a close approximation of a student’s instructional reading level:

- Word recognition test *or*
- Group silent-reading test *or*
- Passage placement accuracy test

Although these three types of assessments may seem unrelated, they are good informal indicators of a student’s reading ability. It is not necessary to administer all three tests to determine a student’s instructional reading level. The advantage to using a group silent-reading test is that it can be administered to all students at the same time. While the class is taking the test, you can read with individual students to obtain their oral reading fluency rate. Alternatively, word recognition tests are given to each student individually, with students reading the words orally to you. Passage placement reading tests must also be administered individually. Word recognition tests and/or oral passage placement tests may be administered individually to students at the same time as the oral reading fluency test (Assessment 1).

Word Recognition Test

Materials:

- *San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability* (see *Assessment*).

Estimated time:

2.5 minutes per student

Procedure:

1. Make copies of the *Student Form*, *Teacher Record*, and *Errors & Reading Levels* scoring sheet.
2. Administer the test per the directions in the introductory paragraph.
3. Transfer student scores to the scoring sheet.

Group Silent Reading Test

Materials:

- Copies of a silent reading test for all students in the class.

Estimated time:

- Will vary, depending on the test.

Procedure:

1. Choose a silent reading test that can be administered to the entire class during one class period. The selected silent reading test may be teacher-prepared or commercial. The most important function of a silent reading test is to yield a measurable score that can be used to rank students according to their instructional reading levels. Examples of commercially prepared tests that lend themselves well to this procedure include:
 - a. Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) (Scholastic, 2003). Scores are reported in Lexile levels.
 - b. Gates-MacGinitie (MacGinitie, MacGinitie, Maria, & Dreyer, 2003). Scores are reported in percentiles.
 - c. McLeod Test of Reading Comprehension (Consortium on Reading Excellence; CORE, 1999). Scores are reported in grade-level scores.
 - d. Measure of Academic Progress (MAPs). This is a standardized computer test with scores reported in RIT (Rasch Unit) scores.
2. Explain the test directions to the class and complete the practice items with the entire group.
3. Instruct students to begin working on the silent reading test. Make sure that students have something they can do independently when they finish the test.
4. After all students have completed the test, record their scores.

Passage Placement Accuracy Test

Procedure:

1. Select a few grade-level *Assessment Passages* (see *Assessment*) based on your estimation of the student's reading level.
2. Tell the student, "We need to find a reading level that is just right for you to practice reading. That means that the passage must be comfortable for you—not too easy and not too hard. In order to find that level, I am going to ask you to read a few passages to me."
3. Give the student a copy of the *Assessment Passage* and say, "The title of this passage is _____. Please begin here (point to the first word) and read out loud to me. If you do not know a word, I will tell it to you. Are you ready? Please begin." **Note:** The oral passage reading test is untimed.

4. When the student finishes reading the passage, ask, “How did you feel when you were reading the passage? Was it too easy? Was it too hard? Was it just right?”

Use the *Determining Reading Levels Chart* (following) to determine whether or not the student is reading the *Assessment Passage* at his/her independent, instructional, or frustration level. The frustration level is one at which the passage is simply too difficult for the student to read, and little or no learning will occur. The instructional level is one at which the material can be read by the student, but some teacher guidance and instruction are necessary for content comprehension. The instructional level is the most important level to determine since it is at this level that learning truly occurs. The independent level is one at which the student can read the passage easily and without teacher assistance or instruction.

Determining Reading Levels Chart (Using a 100-word passage)		
<i>Passage Errors Allowed</i>	<i>Passage Reading Level</i>	<i>Comprehension Level</i>
3 or fewer errors	Independent (97%–100%)	Good to Excellent
4–9 errors	Instructional (91%–96%)	Good to Satisfactory
10 or more errors	Frustration (90% & below)	Satisfactory/Fair/Poor

Examples:

- A student who reads a 100-word passage with 2 errors has an accuracy rate of 98 percent, which indicates that the passage is at the student's *independent* reading level.
- A student who reads a 100-word passage with 5 errors has an accuracy rate of 95 percent, which indicates that the passage is at the student's *instructional* reading level.
- A student who reads a 100-word passage with 12 errors has an accuracy rate of 88 percent, which indicates that the passage is at the student's *frustration* level.

Students may be placed at their instructional or independent level for the purpose of building fluency. They should never practice fluency with a passage in which their reading is less than 90 percent accurate. Accuracy *must* precede fluency, so it is essential that students be monitored for accurate reading before repeated reading practice takes place. **Note:** Refer to “Using the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate Assessment Passages*” (see *Assessments*) for information about determining reading instructional level, assessing cwp, and collecting pretest/posttest data.

Many teachers assign students fluency passages at their instructional level with the intent of having them progress more quickly. Other teachers—especially those of reluctant readers—assign students fluency passages at their independent level with the intent of having them experience immediate success, resulting in increased motivation and self-esteem.

Special Circumstances: Students who are enrolled in Title 1, remedial reading, special education, or English Language Learner (ELL) classes or who have significant reading problems may be more appropriately assessed with an individually administered reading test such as the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test (Woodcock, 2000). This test will help you determine instructional reading levels and gather information about underlying reading problems.

Appropriate Fluency Rate

A student's target fluency rate is based on his/her *instructional reading level*, not the current grade-level placement. For example, the initial goal for a sixth-grade student reading at a third-grade instructional level is 70–110 cwpm, which is the recommended oral reading rate for third-grade readers. Once the student has met the initial goal, increase the cwpm goal to the upper range or move the student to *Practice Passages* at the next grade level.

Keep in mind that student partners always read the same *Practice Passage* at the same time. A fifth-grade ELL student reading at a third-grade level may be partnered with a fifth-grade special education student also reading at the third-grade level. Occasionally, there may be an “outlying student”—one whose instructional reading level does not match that of any other student. In that case, the outlying student may need to be partnered with a teacher, an aide, or a classroom volunteer.

Refer to *Table 1.1* (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2005) for cwpm standards by grade level and school season. As a general rule, students scoring below the 50th percentile benefit from participating in a fluency building program.

Table 1.1
2005 Hasbrouck & Tindal Oral Reading Fluency Data

Jan Hasbrouck and Gerald Tindal completed an extensive study of oral reading fluency in 2004. The results of their study are published in a technical report entitled, "Oral Reading Fluency: 90 Years of Measurement," which is available on the University of Oregon's website, brt.uoregon.edu/tech_reports.htm.

The table below shows the mean oral reading fluency of students in grades 1 through 8 as determined by Hasbrouck and Tindal's data.

You can use the information in this table to draw conclusions and make decisions about the oral reading fluency of your students. **Students scoring below the 50th percentile using the average score of two unpracticed readings from grade-level materials need a fluency-building program.** In addition, teachers can use the table to set the long-term fluency goals for their struggling readers.

Note that there is a difference between monitoring and placement. **Monitoring** with an assessment tool such as *Reading Fluency Monitor* can help you identify students who need to improve their fluency and monitor their progress over time.

Placement is the process of selecting an appropriate level of reading material and setting a reading rate goal within the context of a fluency-building program, such as READ NATURALLY. To place students in READ NATURALLY, use the READ NATURALLY placement table.

Grade	Percentile	Fall CWPM*	Winter CWPM*	Spring CWPM*
1	90		81	111
	75		47	82
	50		23	53
	25		12	28
	10		6	15
2	90	106	125	142
	75	79	100	117
	50	51	72	89
	25	25	42	61
	10	11	18	31

Grade	Percentile	Fall CWPM*	Winter CWPM*	Spring CWPM*
3	90	128	146	162
	75	99	120	137
	50	71	92	107
	25	44	62	78
	10	21	36	48
4	90	145	166	180
	75	119	139	152
	50	94	112	123
	25	68	87	98
	10	45	61	72
5	90	166	182	194
	75	139	156	168
	50	110	127	139
	25	85	99	109
	10	61	74	83
6	90	177	195	204
	75	153	167	177
	50	127	140	150
	25	98	111	122
	10	68	82	93
7	90	180	192	202
	75	156	165	177
	50	128	136	150
	25	102	109	123
	10	79	88	98
8	90	185	199	199
	75	161	173	177
	50	133	146	151
	25	106	115	124
	10	77	84	97

*CWPM = Correct Words Per Minute

Selecting Fluency Partners and Instructional Groups

The appropriate selection of student fluency partnerships is essential to the success of the program. This chapter describes the procedure for ranking students based on assessment results and forming partnerships based on the data.

Materials:

- Fluency data for each student (i.e., a fluency score and an independent/instructional reading level score).
- A student ranking sheet or a computer spreadsheet program that generates ranking order.

Estimated time:

1 hour

Selecting Partners

When selecting fluency partners, match students as closely as possible by both *oral reading fluency rates and instructional reading levels*. Assign partners based on ranking. For example, if using a spreadsheet program, sort first for fluency score and then for reading level. Students ranked as #1 and #2 would be partners, students ranked as #3 and #4 would be partners, and so on. *Partners must be closely matched. As a general rule, their fluency rates should be within 10–15 words of each other.* An appropriate match is critical to success.

An example of an appropriate partnership match would be two sixth-grade students at grade 3 instructional reading level with oral fluency rates within 10–15 words of each other. If one of these students had an oral reading fluency rate of 85 cwpm and the other student had an oral reading fluency rate of 45 cwpm, they would not be matched as fluency partners. The reason for this is that the student with the lower cwpm oral fluency rate would not be able to follow along with the partner's more rapid rate of reading.

Keeping in mind that student partners must always read the same *Practice Passage*, you could partner a fifth-grade ELL student reading at the third-grade level with a fifth-grade special education student who is also reading at the third-grade level. Occasionally, there may be an “outlying student”—one whose instructional reading level does not match that of any other student. This student may be partnered with a teacher, an aide, or a classroom volunteer.

Once partnerships are selected, label the partners as Partner 1 and Partner 2. Partner 1 should be the stronger of the two partners. For example, two sixth-grade students—each with an instructional level of fourth grade—are partners. Partner 1 has a fluency rate of 72 cwpm and Partner 2 has a fluency rate of 68 cwpm. **Note:** Students must be assigned *Grade-Level Practice Passage* timings at their independent or instructional grade level.

Fluency partners may be selected by using spreadsheet software or by manually sorting students' oral reading fluency and instructional reading-level scores.

Using Spreadsheets to Select Fluency Partners

For large groups of students, the easiest way to select fluency partners is to use spreadsheet software. The following steps will help you create the spreadsheet:

1. Begin by opening a new document (blank spreadsheet) and naming it (e.g., Language Arts Period 3, Mr. Smith's Sixth-Grade Class).
2. Label six columns with the following headings: Last Name, First Name, Date, Grade, Oral Reading Fluency Score (cwpm), and Instructional Reading Level.
3. Enter data in the six columns for each student.
4. Sort the data first by fluency (cwpm) and then by instructional reading level, in either ascending or descending order.
5. Assign fluency partners based on the sort (e.g., the first two students on the list would be partners, the second two students would be partners, and so on).

Manually Sorting Scores to Select Fluency Partners

Another method you can use to select fluency partners is manual sorting. The following steps will help you rank student scores more easily:

1. Sort your students' oral fluency scores from Assessment 1 (see *Chapter 1*) in ascending order—from lowest to highest.
2. In the first column on the Initial Assessment Record (see *Appendix*), list students in the order of their oral-reading fluency scores.
3. In the second column, list the oral-reading fluency score for each student.
4. In the third column, list the students' instructional reading-level scores—from the *San Diego Quick Assessment* (see *Assessment*).
5. Match students as closely as possible based on the data, making sure that each partner's fluency score is within 10–15 words of one another and that both students are reading at the same instructional level.

Selecting Instructional Groupings

Although *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* is fundamentally designed for the entire classroom, the following group configurations may be used successfully as well:

- Small groups within a class
- Individual fluency programs
- Parent-student partnerships
- Cross-age partnerships

Entire Classroom

In this instructional grouping, the entire classroom is assessed and fluency partnerships are assigned. All Partner 1s read the assigned *Practice Passage* to their partners for one minute. While they are reading, Partner 2s mark Partner 1 errors and stopping point on their own laminated copy of the passage. Partner 1s then record their own cwpm score on their *Fluency Record* or *Fluency Graph* (see *Appendix*). All Partner 2s then read the same *Practice Passage* for one minute. Results are tracked by Partner 1s on their laminated copy of the passage. Partner 2s then record their own cwpm score on their *Fluency Record*

or *Fluency Graph*. When fluency practice is completed for the day, partners store their portfolio, which contains the laminated *Practice Passage*, *Fluency Records* or *Fluency Graphs*, and a zipper-lock plastic bag with a dry-erase pen and erasing cloth.

Small Groups Within a Class

Repeated reading practice can also be implemented in a small-group setting—such as within a guided reading group—using the same *Practice Passage* for students who read at the same instructional level. Sample Schedule is as follows:

Monday

- The teacher and students preview the passage for accuracy.
- The teacher sets a timer for one minute. Students whisper-read the passage to themselves, underlining difficult words.
- When the timer sounds, students calculate their cwpm score and note the number on their own *Fluency Record* or *Fluency Graph*. This is their initial reading score.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

- The teacher and students choral-read the passage together for one minute.
- The teacher then sets a timer for one minute. Students whisper-read the passage to themselves.
- When the timer sounds, students calculate their cwpm score and note the number on their *Fluency Record* or *Fluency Graph*.

Friday

- Final timing, using one of two options:
 - Option 1**—Students pair up. The teacher sets a timer for one minute. One student reads while the partner follows along, underlining any reading errors and circling the last word read. Partner tells the reader how many cwpm were read, and reader records the number on his/her *Fluency Record* or *Fluency Graph*. This is the final timing. The teacher then resets the timer for one minute. Students repeat the process, with roles reversed.
 - Option 2**—The teacher listens to each student read for one minute while the other students follow along silently. The teacher tells each student his/her cwpm read on the final timing. Students graph their own results.

Individual Fluency Programs

Although all struggling readers should have reading fluency practice as an instructional goal, the partnership model is not appropriate in all educational settings. In a special education, remedial, or resource room—where students' instructional reading levels may be very diverse—it is often not possible to select evenly matched fluency partners. In these cases, individual fluency programs should be developed.

To establish an individual fluency program, the teacher will need to assess each student to determine the appropriate level for fluency practice. Students should be introduced to the concept of repeated reading and given a

rationale as to why they will be engaging in the practice. Finally, each student will need his/her own fluency folder containing two *Practice Passages*—one for the student to read from and the other for the teacher to follow along with—a *Fluency Graph*, and a marking pen for filling in the graph each day.

There are two options for conducting individual fluency programs. With Option 1, each student reads a *Practice Passage* at his/her individual instructional level, and all students follow the same steps every day. With Option 2, each student reads a *Practice Passage* at his/her individual instructional level, and then proceeds through the steps at his/her own rate.

Option 1

- **Monday**—Each student selects a new *Practice Passage* at his/her own instructional level. Students read the passage on their own, underlining difficult or unknown words. The teacher meets with each student individually. The teacher reads the entire passage with the student for accuracy, modeling fluent reading. Then, the student reads the passage while being timed for one minute to obtain an initial cwpm score. The student graphs the cwpm score on his/her *Fluency Graph*.
- **Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday**—All students take turns reading their *Practice Passage* to the teacher while being timed for one minute. Each student then graphs his/her cwpm score on his/her *Fluency Graph*. When not meeting with the teacher, students practice whisper-reading their passage.
- **Friday**—All students take turns reading their *Practice Passage* to the teacher while being timed for one minute in order to obtain a final score. Each student then graphs the final cwpm score on that particular passage on his/her *Fluency Graph*.

Option 2

- **Step 1**—Each student selects a new *Practice Passage* at his/her own instructional level.
- **Step 2**—The teacher meets with each student individually and together they choral-read the passage for accuracy (untimed).
- **Step 3**—Each student reads the passage to the teacher for one minute. The teacher tells the student how many cwpm he/she read. This is the student's initial score.
- **Step 4**—The teacher and the student select a target goal together. The goal should be 20–40 words above the initial timing. For example, if a student reads 50 cwpm on an initial timing, the target goal could be 80. **Note:** Select a target goal that is reasonably attainable for the student, taking into consideration his/her reading level and motivation.
- **Step 5**—Every day during fluency practice, the student reads his/her *Practice Passage* to the teacher for one minute and graphs the cwpm on his/her *Fluency Graph*. When students reach their oral reading goal with fewer than five reading errors, they have “passed” the passage. **Note:** Some students may be able to fluently read a passage in one week or less, while others may need to practice reading the same passage for two or more consecutive weeks before they reach their predetermined goal.

Parent-Student Partnerships

Parents can be easily trained to conduct one-minute fluency timings and data-recording procedures either at the school or at home. Working with their children on *Automatic Word Lists*, *Fluency Building Sheets*, and *Practice Passages* is a highly effective way for parents to support a school's readers. Home data-recording sheets can be brought to school and checked by the teacher. Additional *Practice Passages* can be sent home based on the data. As parents conduct fluency timings at home, they will acquire first-hand knowledge of their children's reading improvement on a daily basis.

Cross-Age Partnerships

Older students may be assigned as fluency partners to younger students. The older students conduct one-minute fluency timings and record the data of their younger partners.

Introducing the Fluency Concept

This chapter provides a model for introducing the concept of fluency to students. We believe that students deserve an explanation prior to engaging in any new procedure. They are more likely to be enthusiastic participants when they understand the “what” and the “why.” In the words of noted educator Dr. Anita Archer, “Rationale reduces resistance.”

Materials:

- A copy of a sample *Practice Passage* (see *Fluency Building Sheets*) for each student. **Note:** The readability level of the passage should match that of the lowest reader in the class.
- A copy of a *Fluency Graph* (select from 1, 2, or 3 in the *Appendix*) for each student.
- Overhead transparencies of the sample *Practice Passage* and the selected *Fluency Graph*.
- **Optional:** Overhead transparencies of blackline masters “What Is Fluency?” and “Why Is Fluency Important?” (see *Appendix*).
- Marking pens for students and an erasable marking pen for the teacher.
- Color markers for teacher and students.
- A timer.

Estimated time:

20–30 minutes

Use Activity Procedure or Scripted procedure

Activity Procedure

- **Step 1: Select the *Practice Passage*.** Select one passage for classroom demonstration and training. The readability of the selected passage should match the lowest level of reading in the class. For example, in a sixth-grade class, if the student who reads at the lowest level reads at the third-grade level, the passage selected for training should be at a third-grade readability level. It is important that students do not struggle while reading the *Practice Passage*.
- **Step 2: Introduce the concept of fluency.** Conduct the *Activity Procedure* or the *Scripted Procedure*, following.
 - Using grade-appropriate language, introduce students to the value of building fluency. You may paraphrase the information in the *Introduction* section and discuss the benefits of rereading, the concept of “practice makes perfect,” and the correlation among fluency, comprehension, and work completion.

Optional Scripted Procedure

- Present the overhead transparency of “What Is Reading Fluency?” and say:
 - “Our class will be starting a daily reading fluency program. Before I explain the program to you, I want to talk about what fluency is and why it is important. Reading fluency is the ability to read text accurately. That means that you know the words. Reading fluency is also

the ability to read text quickly. However, fluency is not speed-reading. Good readers read quickly, but not *too* quickly. Finally, reading fluency is the ability to read with expression. As readers, we want to be sure to stop at the punctuation marks and read so that other people can understand what we are saying. That means that we need to clearly say each word, not read so fast that the words run together. We need to remember the three parts to fluent reading: reading accurately, reading quickly, and reading with expression.”

- “Listen. When we read fluently, we are reading accurately, quickly, and with expression.”
- “Everyone, when you read fluently, you are reading how? (Students should respond, “accurately.”) You are also reading how? (Students should respond, “quickly.”) But you are also reading with what, everyone?” (Students should respond, “with expression.”)
- “So, reading fluently is reading accurately, quickly, and with expression. Say it with me, everyone.” (Students should respond, “Reading fluently is reading accurately, quickly, and with expression.”)
- Present the overhead transparency of “Why Is Reading Fluency Important?” and say:
 - “It is important to work on improving reading fluency for three main reasons. How many reasons?” (Students should respond, “three.”)
 - “The most important reason is because reading fluency is related to reading comprehension. Fluent readers understand what they are reading. Fluent readers have good what, everyone?” (Students should respond, “comprehension.”)
 - “If we can read words easily or fluently, we can pay better attention to what we are reading. So the main reason we are going to work on reading fluency is that we will improve our what, everyone? Our ... ” (Students should respond, “comprehension.”)
 - “Fluent readers like to read because reading is easy for them. If reading is easy for us, we will read more and if we read more, we will learn more. So, another reason for improving reading fluency is to be able to read more independently. We are going to practice reading fluency so that we will become what kind of readers, everyone?” (Students should respond, “independent.”)
 - “Finally, fluent readers need less time to complete their class assignments and their homework. Fluent readers read faster, so they finish work faster and have more time for outside activities. Raise your hand if you would like to be able to finish your homework in less time. (*Pause for students’ response.*) So, we will practice reading fluency so that we will improve our what, everyone?” (Students should respond, “work completion.”)

Activity Procedure

- **Step 3: Explain the *Practice Passage*.** Pass out copies of the selected *Practice Passage* to students. Point out the numbers at the beginning of each line in the passage. Explain to students that these numbers will help them keep track of how many words they read in one minute.

■ **Step 4: Model the reading fluency procedure.**

- Explain to students that when they read a passage, they will start with the first word and read until the timer sounds. As they read, they should track with a pen (without making marks) and underline any unknown or difficult words. When the timer sounds, they will draw a diagonal line after the last word read.
- Demonstrate the above procedure with the overhead transparency of the selected *Practice Passage*.
- Continue using the transparency to demonstrate **how to count the total number of words read**. Starting at the number at the beginning of the last line read, simply count from that number to the last word read. This is the total number of words read. Write that number in the calculation notation at the bottom of the passage page. Count the number of underlined (i.e., unknown or incorrect) words. Write that number in the calculation notation at the bottom of the passage page. Subtract the number of underlined words from the total number of words to determine the **correct words per minute (cwpm)**. Write that number in the calculation notation at the bottom of the passage page.

Optional Scripted Procedure

- “Listen. When we read a passage, we will start with the first word of the passage (point) and read until the timer sounds. Where will we start, everyone?” (Students should respond, “with the first word of the passage.”)
- “As we read, we should track with our finger or pen and be ready to underline any unknown or difficult words. A difficult word is a word that we cannot figure out within a couple of seconds. What will we do with difficult words, everyone?” (Students should respond, “underline them.”)
- “When the timer sounds, we will draw a diagonal line after the last word we read. Watch me.” (Demonstrate drawing a diagonal line.)
- “Next, we need to figure out the total number of correct words we read. To do this, we look at where we put the diagonal line after the last word we read. What do we do first, everyone?” (Students should respond, “find the last word we read.”)
- “Then we go back to the beginning of that line. Where do we go, everyone?” (Students should respond, “to the beginning of the last line we read.”)
- “We find the number count on that line. What do we find, everyone?” (Students should respond, “the number count.”)
- “Then we count from that number to the last word read. That is the total number of words we read. What is it, everyone?” (Students should respond, “the total number of words read.”)
- “We write that number on this line at the bottom of the page.” (Write the number on the “Total Words Read” line.)
- “Next, we count the number of underlined words. What do we count, everyone?” (Students should respond, “the number of underlined words.”)

- “We write that number on this line.” (Write the number on the “Errors” line.)
- “Then, we subtract the number of underlined words from the total number of words read. The answer gives us the number of correct words read per minute, or the cwpm. (Write the number on the “CWPM” line.) What does it tell us, everyone?” (Students should respond, “the number of correct words read per minute.”)

Activity Procedure

- **Step 5: Students whisper-read the Practice Passage.** Conduct the *Activity Procedure* or the *Scripted Procedure*, following.
 - Set the timer for one minute and ask students to whisper-read the passage, following the procedures of tracking, underlining unknown/difficult words, and drawing a diagonal line after the last word read when the timer sounds. **Note:** Students must whisper-read in order to simulate oral reading.
 - When the timer sounds, ask students to count the total number of words read, count the number of underlined words, and subtract the number of underlined words to determine their cwpm scores. Monitor students carefully.
 - Set the timer for another minute, and ask students to reread the passage, beginning with the first word.
 - When the timer sounds, ask students to determine their cwpm scores.
 - Lead a group discussion about fluency practice. Ask students to raise their hands if their cwpm scores were higher with the second reading. Solicit student reflection on why they might have read more words the second time.

Optional Scripted Procedure

- “Now it is your turn. I am going to set the timer for one minute. When I tell you to begin, I want you to whisper-read the passage, beginning with the first word. It is important that you whisper-read because we are practicing oral—not silent—reading. As you read, underline any unknown or difficult words. When the timer sounds, draw a diagonal mark after the last word you read. Let’s check: Will you read silently? (Students should respond, “no.”) How will you read? (Students should respond, “whisper-read.”) What will you do when the timer sounds? (Students should respond, “draw a slash mark after the last word I read.”)
- When the timer sounds, say, “Draw a diagonal mark after the last word you read. Go back to the beginning of that line. Say the number and continue counting until you reach the last word read. That is your total number of words. Write that number down at the bottom of the passage page.” Monitor students carefully.
- “Now, go back to the beginning of the passage and count the number of underlined words. Write that number down at the bottom of the page.” Monitor students carefully.
- “Subtract that number from your total number of words, and write it on the last line.” Monitor students carefully.

- “Now you have your number of correct words per minute, or cwpm.”
- “Now you are going to whisper-read the passage again. Start with the first word of the passage, whisper-read, and underline unknown or difficult words. When the timer sounds this time, circle the last word you read instead of drawing a diagonal line. Ready, please begin.”
- When the timer sounds, say, “Circle the last word you read. Go back to the beginning of that line. Say the number and continue counting until you reach the last word read. That is your total number of words. Write that number down.” Monitor students carefully.
- “Now go back to the beginning of the passage, and count the number of underlined words. Write that number down. Subtract that number from your total number of words.” Monitor students carefully.
- “Now you have your cwpm score for your second reading.”
- “Compare your first timing score with your second timing score. (*Pause as students compare.*) Raise your hand if you read more words the second time than you read the first time.” The vast majority of students will have read more words the second time.
- “Turn to your neighbor (partner) and tell why you think you read more words the second time.” Monitor students carefully.
- “As I monitored, I heard many of you say that when you read the second time, you already knew the words. You were familiar with the passage, so you could read faster the second time. There were no surprises on the second reading. You are exactly right. The more you practice a skill, the better you get. So in order to become more fluent readers, we are going to practice every day.”

Activity Procedure

- **Step 6: Students graph their cwpm scores.** Conduct the *Activity Procedure* or the *Scripted Procedure*, following.
 - Using the overhead transparency of the *Fluency Graph*, demonstrate how to use it to record cwpm scores.
 - Using their copy of the *Fluency Graph*, have students practice graphing their cwpm scores on their first and second readings of the demonstration passage.

Optional Scripted Procedure

- “Now we are going to look at how to graph cwpm scores. Each one of you has a graph that looks like this (show the example *Fluency Graph*). At the top, you will write your name, your partner’s name, the class you are in, and the date you first started using this graph. For today’s practice, just fill in your name.”
- “Notice that there is a place for the date and the passage number at the bottom of the graph. Fill in today’s date and the practice passage number. Since all of us are reading the same passage on the same day, we will all have the same date and passage number.”
- “Now look at the numbers on the left side of the graph. Those numbers represent the number of correct words you read in one minute. What do the numbers stand for?” (Students should respond, “number of correct words read in one minute.”)

- “Do you see a place for errors on this graph? (Students should respond, “no.”) You will not be recording errors on this graph. You will record only correct words per minute, or cwpm, from the practice passage onto the graph.”
- “Look at the bottom of the graph. Do the numbers start with 1? (Students should respond, “no.”) What do they start with? (Students should respond, “5.”) That’s right; the numbers are in increments of 5.”
- “Let’s pretend that I read 45 cwpm on my initial timing. Put your finger on the number 45. I will color in the squares from 5 to 45 to graph my initial timing.”
- “Let’s pretend that on my second timing, I read 52 cwpm. Is the number 52 on the graph? (Students should respond, “no.”) So I will have to estimate. To do that, I will go to the number closest to 52. What number will that be? (Students should respond, “50.”) Then I will fill in the column just a little higher than 50 to show that I read more than 50 cwpm. This time I will color in the squares from 5 to just past 50 to graph my second timing.”
- “Now it’s your turn. Graph your first and second timing scores. Raise your hand if you need help.” Walk around the classroom and monitor as students graph their cwpm scores.

Establishing Partner Behavior

In order for the partnership model to be successful, students need to work together in a polite and respectful manner. This chapter offers suggestions for introducing the concept of a working relationship within a cooperative partnership.

Students need to be instructed in appropriate fluency partnership behavior (e.g., leaning in and whispering), remembering that the only people who need to hear them are their partners, and providing appropriate corrective feedback on missed words. Addressing classroom noise level during training is key to preventing many potential problems. Teachers are often amazed at the low level of classroom noise when fluency timings are in progress.

Materials:

None

Estimated time:

10 minutes

Use Activity Procedure or Scripted Procedure

Activity Procedure

- Tell students that they will be working with a fluency partner for six minutes each day, emphasizing that the partnership is a *working relationship* and not necessarily a friendship. You may want to give an example of cooperation within a workplace, relating that although people do not necessarily like everyone they work with and they may not want to be close friends, they still need to treat each other with respect. You may also want to explain that the partnerships were assigned based on assessment information and the fact that “the computer assigned the partners.” **Note:** If the concept of fluency is discussed completely with the class, there are generally fewer problems within partnerships. However, very occasionally, there may be partners who simply do not work well together. In that case, partners may need to be reassigned.
- Set rules about the appropriate noise level during fluency practice. Remind students that half the class will be reading aloud at the same time, and that the only people who need to hear them are their fluency partners. Tell students that they will “lean in and whisper” when reading to their partners. Model the procedure, giving positive and negative examples.
- Teach students to give polite feedback during the error-correction procedure (see *Figure 4.1*).

Figure 4.1
An Example of the Error-Correction Procedure

While the reader is reading aloud for one minute, the fluency partner follows along and underlines any errors. When the timer sounds, the partner notes the last word read, then provides polite feedback in the following manner.

Partner: “You read ____ (total number of) words. I heard ____ (number of) errors.” The partner then points to each underlined (incorrect) word and pronounces it correctly for the reader. The partner asks the reader to repeat the word correctly.

Reader: Records the cwpm on the *Fluency Graph*.

Note: Establish a “No Arguing” rule between partners at this point in the training.

Optional Scripted Procedure

- “We are going to be working in partnerships to practice reading fluency for six minutes every day. Let me tell you about partnerships. Partnerships are a working relationship. What are they, everyone? (Students should respond, “a working relationship.”) A working relationship means that you work together. You do not have to be friends with your partners. You do not have to eat lunch together or walk down the hall together. You do not have to talk to each other outside of this class. But here is what you do need to do. For the six minutes that you are working in the partnership, you have to be polite and respectful. What do you have to be, everyone?” (Students should respond, “polite and respectful.”)
- “In your partnerships, one of you will be Partner 1 and one of you will be Partner 2. All Partners 1s will read at the same time while all Partner 2s will listen, follow along, and underline any reading errors. That means that half the class will be reading at one time. If all Partner 1s read in a regular speaking voice, is it possible that the noise level in the room will be too high? Yes or no? (Students should respond, “yes.”) In order to keep the noise level down so that partners can hear each other read, you will lean in and whisper. What will you do, everyone?” (Students should respond, “lean in and whisper.”)
- Choose a student partner to demonstrate the procedure: “I am (Juan’s) partner. Watch me read to Juan.” Demonstrate reading in a normal speaking tone while looking straight ahead. “Did I lean in and whisper? Yes or no? (Students should respond, “no.”) Watch me again.” Demonstrate the “lean in and whisper” procedure. “Did I lean in and whisper?” (Students should respond, “yes.”)
- “While your partner is reading, you will follow along and underline any errors you hear. What will you do, everyone? (Students should respond, “follow along and underline errors.”) When the timer sounds, you will draw a diagonal line after the last word your partner read. What will you do when the timer sounds, everyone? (Students should respond,

“draw a diagonal line after the last word my partner read.”) Then you will figure out your partner’s correct words per minute, or cwpm, score. What will you do, everyone?” (Students should respond, “figure out my partner’s correct words per minute score.”)

- “The next step is reporting to your partner. What is the next step, everyone? (Students should respond, “reporting to my partner.”) First, you will tell your partner the total number of words that he/she read. Say, ‘You read _____ words.’ What do you say, everyone?” (Students should respond, “you read _____ words.”)
- “Then you say, ‘I heard _____ errors.’ What do you say, everyone? (Students should respond, “I heard _____ errors.”) Why do you suppose I want you to say ‘I heard _____ errors’ rather than ‘You made _____ errors’? (Students should suggest it sounds better.) Yes, it sounds kinder. Then you tell your partner their correct words per minute. That is the number they will graph at the end of the session.”
- “Finally, you will point to any reading errors your partner made, one word at a time, and pronounce the word correctly for your partner. Your partner will then read the word again correctly.”
- “There is one very important rule you need to follow when working with your partner. The rule is ‘No Arguing.’ What is the rule, everyone? (Students should respond, “no arguing.”) The reason we have a ‘No Arguing’ rule is that arguing wastes time. What does it do, everyone? (Students should respond, “it wastes time.”) If your partner underlines a word that you think you read correctly, you could stop reading and tell your partner that he/she made a mistake. But if you do that, you will miss the rest of the timing for the day and won’t be able to record a score. So, if your partner hears you read a word incorrectly, it is counted as an error because there is no what? (Students should respond, “no arguing.”) The best thing for partners to do is to treat each other fairly.”

Training Students in the Partnership Model

Taking the time to properly train students in *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* procedures will ensure that the program runs smoothly. This chapter discusses how to teach students correct fluency procedures. Once students are properly trained, the entire fluency practice should take only six minutes of the reading period each day.

Devote a *minimum* of two to three class periods to training (Steps 3–6 in *Chapters 3–6*). We recommend that an explicit instructional model be employed when teaching the procedures. Each procedure should be introduced through modeling, then considerable guided practice time should be allowed with the teacher walking around the classroom to monitor, give feedback, and remodel procedures as necessary before students practice the procedure independently.

Teachers may want to randomly assign or specifically select partners for this step so that students can practice the procedure before teaming up with their ultimately assigned partners. Once all students feel comfortable with the procedure, they can then be placed with their assigned fluency partners.

Materials:

- For each fluency partnership, one pocket portfolio that includes two copies of a preselected *Practice Passage* (either laminated or placed in a plastic sleeve) and two copies of a *Fluency Graph* (one for each partner).
- For each fluency partnership, a zipper-lock plastic bag containing a dry-erase marker and erasing cloth.
- A *Fluency Graph* for each student.
- Overhead transparencies of the selected *Grade-Level Practice Passage* and *Fluency Graph*.
- A timer.

Estimated time:

20–30 minutes

Use Activity Procedure or Scripted Procedure

Activity Procedure

- Select a *Practice Passage* at the readability level that matches the lowest reading level in the class.
- Seat students with fluency partners (randomly assigned or specifically selected) and assign them the numbers 1 and 2.
- Using the overhead transparency of the selected *Practice Passage*, model the fluency partnership with a student partner, emphasizing how the listener should track the words being read by the partner. Tracking helps students keep their place as their partners read and makes marking errors easier.
- Model the procedure for marking errors and noting the stopping point.
- Model the error-correction procedure (see *Figure 4.1* in *Chapter 4*).
- Model how to calculate cwpw by counting the total number of words read and subtracting errors. For example:

Total Words Read	<u>120</u>
- Errors	<u>5</u>
= CWPM	<u>115</u>

- Using the overhead transparency of the *Fluency Graph*, review how to graph cwpm scores.
- After reviewing and modeling all aspects of fluency partnership activities, have students practice the fluency procedure. Set the timer for one minute, and ask all Partner 1s to read. Remind them to lean in and whisper-read to their partners. Remind Partner 2s to track their partner's reading.
- Instruct Partner 2s to give polite feedback to Partner 1s.
- Set the timer again for one minute and ask Partner 2s to read. Remind them to lean in and whisper-read to their partners. Remind Partner 1s to track their partner's reading.
- Instruct Partner 1s to give polite feedback to Partner 2s.

Optional Scripted Procedure

- Select a student with whom to demonstrate the partner procedure. Ask the student to read, and instruct him/her to make a few reading errors. Say, "Watch as my partner Sarita and I conduct our fluency timings. Sarita is Partner 1, so she will read first. Watch and see what I do while she is reading."
- Set the timer for one minute and ask the student to begin reading. Model tracking with a pen and underlining reading errors as the student reads.
- After the timer sounds, ask, "What did you observe me doing with my pen as my partner was reading? (Students should respond, "tracking.") Yes, it is important to follow along by tracking under each word as my partner reads. What did I do when I heard an error? (Students should respond, "you underlined it.") Yes, I underlined the word and kept tracking. Did I make any extra marks on the passage? (Students should respond, "no.") That's correct. I made a mark only if I heard an error. If I had drawn a line under each word my partner read, would I have been able to tell when she made an error? Yes or no? (Students should respond, "no."). Also, marking under all of the words would be messy and hard to clean off in only one minute."
- "Now listen to me give polite feedback to Sarita: 'You read 86 words. I heard 2 errors. $86 - 2 = 84$. 84 is your cwpm score. Mark that number on your graph. You will color in the squares later.' "
- "Now I need to tell Sarita the words she missed and ask her to repeat them." Point to the first error and say, "This word is _____. What word?" Continue with the other missed words.
- "Now it is everyone's turn. Raise your hand if you are Partner 1s. Raise your hand if you are Partner 2s. When I say, 'Please begin,' all Partner 1s will lean in and whisper-read to their partners. All Partner 2s should have their pens and be ready to track their partner's reading, mark reading errors, and draw a diagonal line at the stopping point. Please begin."

- When the timer sounds, say, “All Partner 2s, give polite feedback to Partner 1s.” Partner 1s mark their cwpm scores on their graph. Monitor students carefully.
- “Now it is Partner 2’s turn. When I say ‘Please begin,’ all Partner 2s will lean in and whisper-read to their partners. All Partner 1s should have their pens and be ready to track their partner’s reading, mark reading errors, and draw a diagonal line at the stopping point. Please begin.”
- When the timer sounds, say, “ Now, Partner 1s should give polite feedback to Partner 2s.” Partner 2s mark their cwpm scores on their graph. Monitor students carefully.
- At the end of the timings, have one partner from each partnership put the materials away.

Managing Materials

Well-organized materials that are easily accessible to students will assist in the establishment of effective fluency routines. This chapter includes ideas for initial implementation and ongoing management of *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* materials.

Materials:

- One pocket portfolio for each partnership. Label each portfolio with the names of Partner 1 and Partner 2.
- Each portfolio should hold two copies of the same *Practice Passage* (laminated or enclosed in a plastic sleeve), a *Fluency Graph* for each student, and a zipper-lock plastic bag containing a dry-erase marker and erasing cloth.
- Stored Practice Passages in a central file that is accessible to students in order of readability.

Estimated Time:
10–15 minutes

Activity Procedure

- *Practice Passages* for each partnership. (*Practice Passages* are number-coded by grade level [e.g., all fifth-grade-level passages are numbered in the 500s, all sixth-grade-level passages are numbered in the 600s]. This coding system enables teachers to note reading levels without the levels being obvious to students.)
- Tell the class where the *Practice Passages* and partnership portfolios will be located.
- Demonstrate the process for choosing a new passage on Friday for fluency practice the next week:
 - Take the currently used *Practice Passages* out of the plastic sleeves.
 - Return the passages to the designated file and select two copies of a different *Practice Passage* within the same readability level or per the teacher's instruction.
- Teach students to return their partnership portfolios—with all materials—to the designated location.

Additional Fluency Tips

- Once students are trained in the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* instructional format (see *Table I.1* in the *Introduction*), use the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate Sample Schedule* (see *Program Overview*). It is most effective and efficient for students to begin reading a new *Practice Passage* on the first day of the school week.
- Make certain that each partnership knows who is Partner 1 and who is Partner 2. Partner 1 is the stronger reader and always reads first. However, do not share that information with students; simply state that Partner 1 reads first for management purposes.

- Tell students where they will sit during fluency practice. For example, some teachers make a seating arrangement for the language arts period that places partners next to each other. Other teachers have Partner 1s move beside Partner 2s' desks.
- Begin the first fluency practice session of the week with an accuracy check. Have students read the *Practice Passage*—untimed—to determine any unknown or difficult words. If neither of the partners knows a word, supply it for them. This accuracy check should occur only on the first day of a new *Practice Passage* each week.
- Remember that students need a minimum of three to five repeated readings of the same *Practice Passage*. Since both partners will be reading the same *Practice Passage*, they will hear it twice a day. Practice Passages should be changed once a week so that students are not able to memorize them. **Note:** The reading level of a Practice Passage is changed only after teacher review and assessment.
- Remind students that they are responsible for keeping to the six-minute time frame:
 - 1 minute for the partners to get ready.
 - 1 minute for Partner 1 to read.
 - 1 minute for Partner 2 to tell Partner 1 the total number of words read, the errors, corrections, and cwpm. Partner 1 quickly records his/her cwpm.
 - 1 minute for Partner 2 to read.
 - 1 minute for Partner 1 to tell Partner 2 the total number of words read, the errors, corrections, and cwpm. Partner 2 quickly records his/her cwpm.
 - 1 minute for both partners to color in their own graphs and put materials away.
- Generally speaking, fluency partners provide accountability for each other. Occasionally, a partnership may appear to be awarding inflated scores. A word or two in private to the “suspects” should solve the problem, along with maintaining close proximity while the partnership is conducting its timings.
- *Continually* monitor students closely during the six-minute fluency practices.

Student Progress and Record Keeping

Record keeping is an essential component of *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*. It is critical to monitor improvement and make instructional decisions based on individual student progress. This may be accomplished by using either the *Fluency Record* or the *Fluency Graphs* (see *Appendix*). Teach students how to graph their own progress. Students tend to enjoy using *Fluency Records* and *Fluency Graphs*, as these tools make it easy for them to see their progress. Graphs can be especially motivating to students who have not had much reading success in the past. It gives them a concrete way to see their reading skills improve.

As a general rule, students who repeatedly read *Practice Passages* at the correct instructional level make weekly progress—even if only by an increase of a few correct words per minute. Give special attention to any student whose reading rates are not increasing from week to week.

Determine whether students are reading at the expected rate for their instructional reading levels (see *Table 1.1* in *Chapter 1*). Remember, each student should read at the rate commensurate with the *instructional reading level*, not the grade-level placement. Reading rates increase as students are able to read more difficult material.

Check your students' *Fluency Records* or *Fluency Graphs* on a regular basis in order to determine that:

- Adequate progress is being made.
- Students have been assigned appropriate *Practice Passages*—neither too easy nor too difficult.
- Students have been assigned appropriate fluency partners.
- It is the appropriate time to increase the difficulty level of the *Practice Passage* being used by partners.

Making Instructional Decisions Based on Fluency Graphs

The following examples demonstrate how the information on a student's *Fluency Record* or *Fluency Graph* can help you make important instructional decisions.

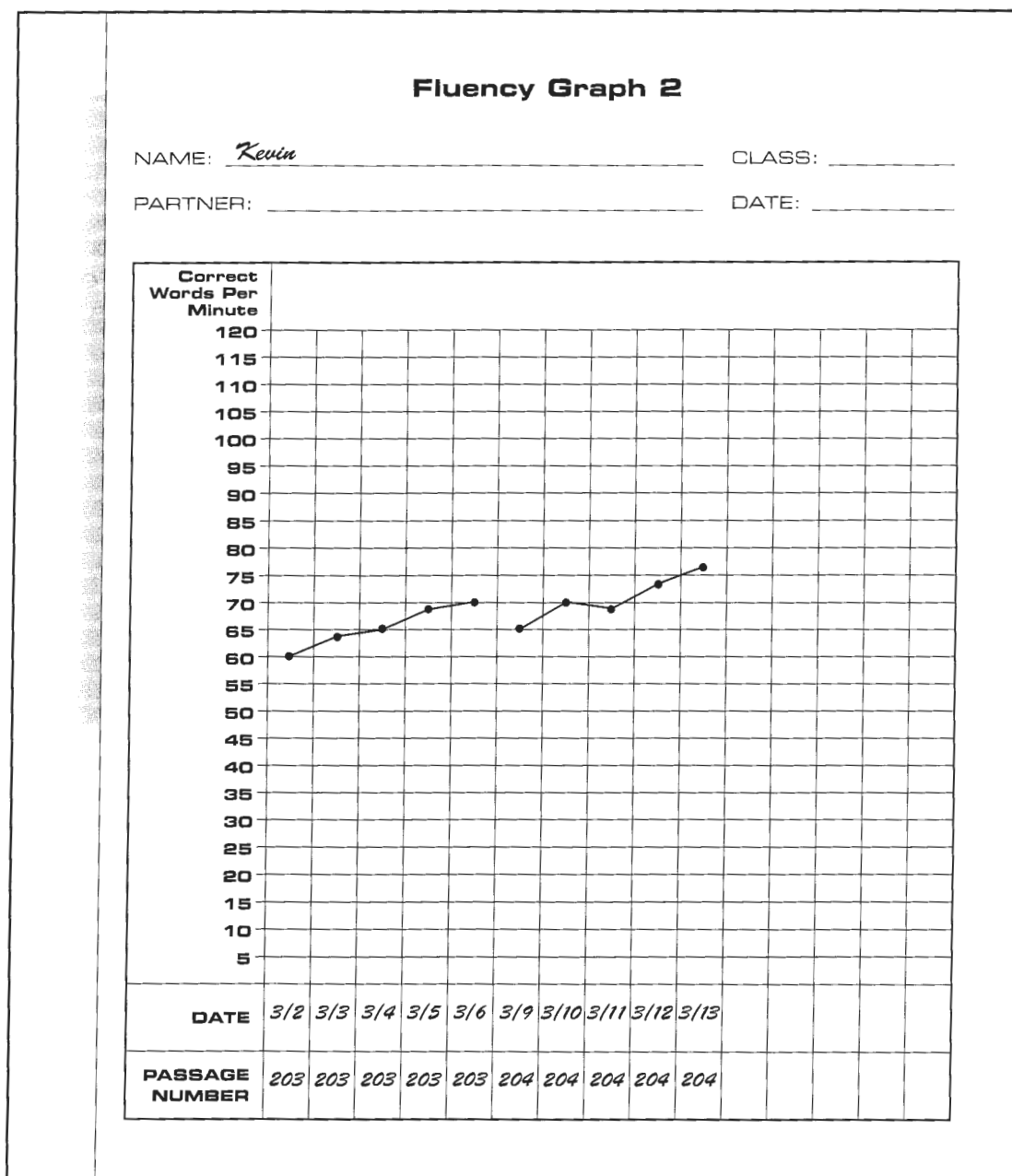
Example 1: Kevin

Kevin is a fifth-grade student with a second-grade instructional reading level. Based on *Table 1.1* (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2005) in *Chapter 1*, he is within the expected reading rate for his instructional level. Kevin is also making adequate progress. The first five days on his *Fluency Graph* (see *Figure 7.1*) reflect rereading the same *Practice Passage*. His first reading on Monday was 60 cwpm. After practicing the passage four more times, his ending fluency rate was 70 cwpm.

Notice what happens the following week (see March 9 column). Kevin is now reading a new *Practice Passage*. However, his beginning fluency rate has increased by five words (from 60 to 65 cwpm) when compared to the previous Monday—even though this is a new *Practice Passage*. As Kevin continued to reread this passage during the second week, his reading rate steadily improved. As Kevin's reading rate continues to improve and he begins to

approach 80 cwpm, he will most likely be ready to start practicing *Practice Passages* at the third-grade level. Kevin's expected fluency rate goal would then range from 70 to 110 cwpm.

Figure 7.1
Kevin's Fluency Graph

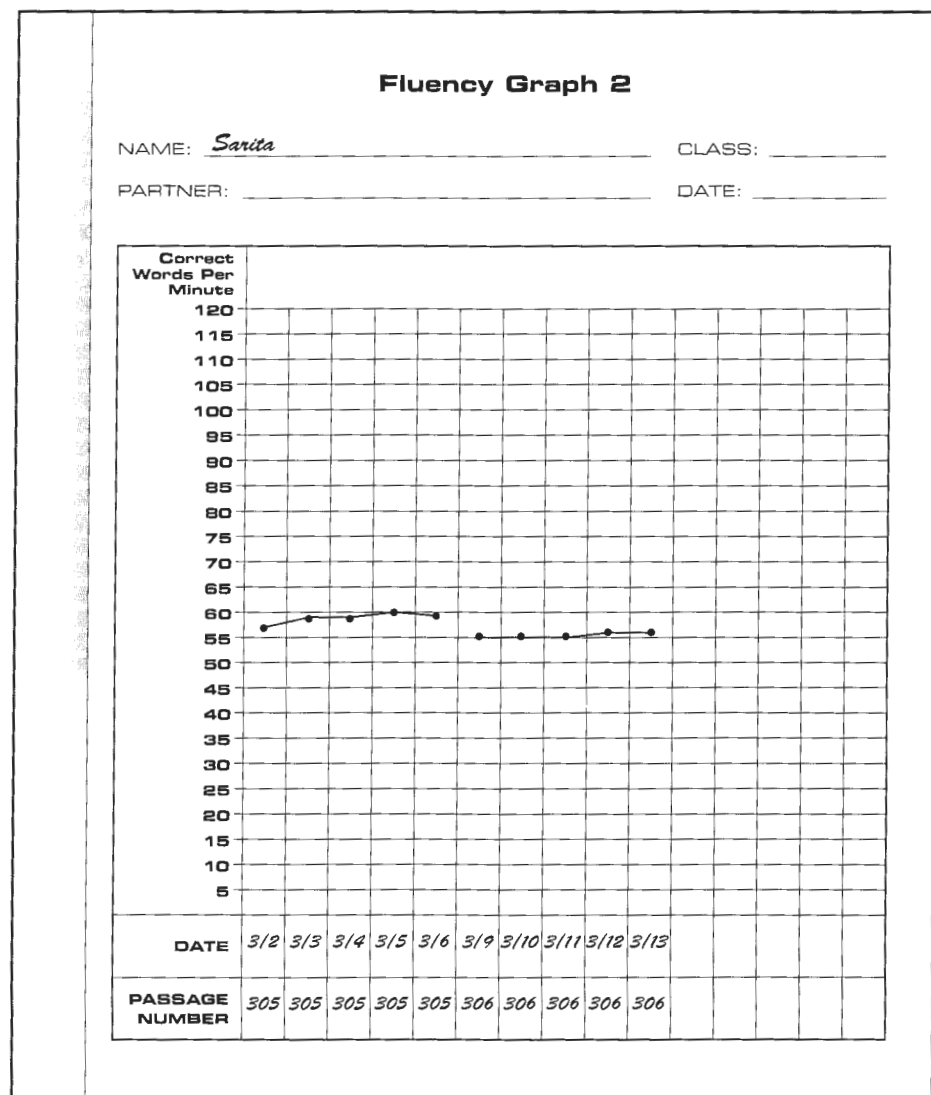


Example 2: Sarita

Sarita is reading at a third-grade instructional level and was assigned a third-grade *Practice Passage*. Based on Table 1.1 (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2005) in Chapter 1, the appropriate goal for Sarita is to read 70–110 cwpm.

A glance at Sarita's *Fluency Graph* (see Figure 7.2) reveals that she is reading below her expected range. In this case, the teacher decides that he needs to reevaluate whether Sarita has been placed correctly at her instructional level. Based on the reevaluation, the teacher will decide whether or not to: (1) lower the *Practice Passage* reading level; (2) add practice with the *Automatic Word Lists*; or (3) incorporate additional instructional strategies such as the ones in the following section, "Helping the Student Who Is Not Making Adequate Progress." (Refer to the *Practice Passages* and the *Automatic Word Lists*—both in the *Fluency Building Sheets* section—for choosing *Automatic Word Lists* to use with your students.)

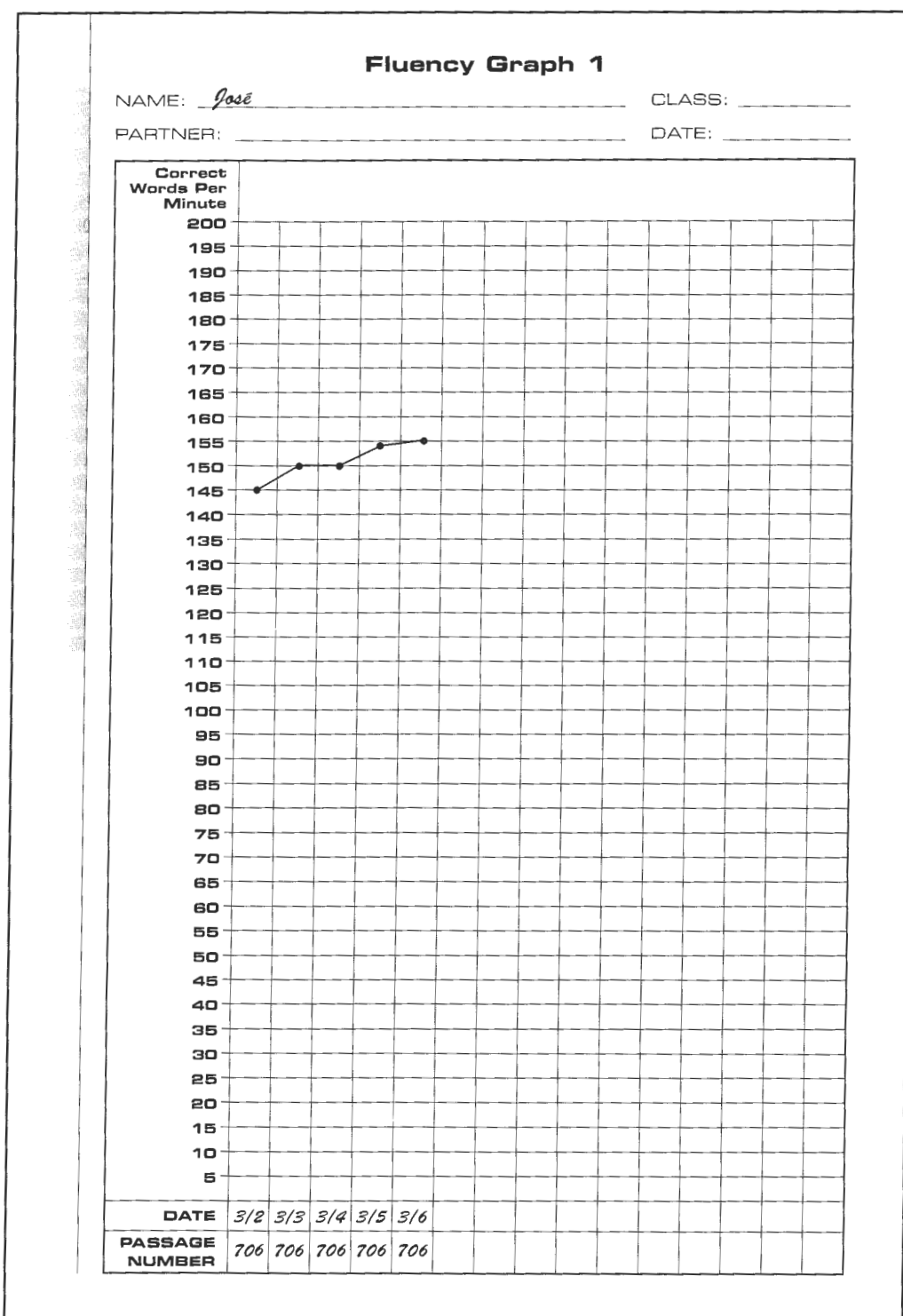
Figure 7.2
Sarita's Fluency Graph



Example 3: José

José is a fourth-grade student with a fourth-grade instructional reading level. His fluency goal, as shown in *Table 1.1* (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2005) in *Chapter 1*, is 125 cwpm. When José's teacher reviewed his *Fluency Graph* (see *Figure 7.3*), she noticed that his reading rate is above his goal rate. She decided to assign fifth-grade *Practice Passages* to José, which may be more challenging for him.

Figure 7.3
José's Fluency Graph



Helping the Student Who Is Not Making Adequate Progress

If a student is not making progress in the passage fluency and word-building activities in *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*, the reason may be is that the assigned *Practice Passages* do not match the student's instructional reading level. A student must be placed at the correct instructional reading level in order to make the expected progress. When students practice fluency at their correct instructional levels, the vast majority of them make excellent progress. However, if after examining a student's *Fluency Graph* or *Fluency Record* you determine that little progress has been made in two or more weeks, consider the following:

- If a student reads fewer than 40 cwpm, an intensive comprehensive reading program should be used instead of, or in addition to, *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*. A student who does not read more than 40 cwpm needs explicit instruction in underlying reading skills before reading fluency can be developed.
- Read the *Practice Passage* with the student to ascertain if he/she has been placed at the correct instructional reading level. The student should be able to correctly read approximately 95 percent of the words when reading at the appropriate instructional reading level. Note the errors the student is making. Perhaps many of the words the student is having difficulty with are high-frequency sight words. In this case, the student is likely to benefit from additional practice using the *Automatic Word Lists*. These lists contain sets of the most commonly encountered (i.e., high-frequency) words in the written English language.
- If you observe that a student is having great difficulty reading an assigned *Practice Passage*, select another one that is one grade level below. If the student reads less than 95 percent of the words correctly in the new passage, have him/her read a *Practice Passage* at an even lower reading level.
- A student's reading fluency problems may be associated with poor decoding skills. Assess whether the student would benefit from extra instruction in decoding.
- When students are first presented with new *Practice Passages*, make a point of meeting with the partnerships of struggling readers to ensure that they are demonstrating adequate accuracy. Consistently and carefully monitor partnerships of struggling readers throughout the week.
- A stronger reader may be paired with a struggling reader as a practice partner. The stronger reader reads the *Practice Passage* while the struggling reader follows closely behind, echoing the words of the stronger reader. The struggling reader will gain additional reading strength by having the passage read almost simultaneously. Practice partnership sessions should take place in addition to the regular *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* sessions.
- Give fluency partners extra untimed reading-practice opportunities. Partners can whisper-read to each other, thus gaining additional rereadings of the same *Practice Passage* before taking their formal one-minute timings. Whisper-reading will help to build the confidence of struggling readers before their actual word counts are recorded.

- Fluency partners may also “ping-pong read” sentences back and forth to each other as another form of practice. This practice will also help students gain confidence and familiarity with the *Practice Passage* prior to the formal fluency timing.

Comprehension and Summary Writing Strategies

Comprehension strategies (e.g., summarizing and paraphrasing) and the use of graphic organizers can be taught and practiced using the *Practice Passages* in *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*. We recommend that students be taught comprehension strategies and how to use graphic organizers directly through modeling and guided practice, bolstered by independent practice. Oral activities can easily be extended into a mini-lesson on how to take notes on expository material using the indentation note-taking strategy as described in the *Skills for School Success Series* (Archer & Gleason, 2002). Examples of effective comprehension strategies for nonfiction include:

- Summarizing
- Paraphrasing
- Retelling
- Describing
- Learning expository text structure

Summarizing

One method of improving students' comprehension skills is to teach summarizing. First, model summarizing by pausing after reading aloud each paragraph of a *Practice Passage* from an overhead transparency. Then, "think aloud" while you determine the main idea of each paragraph, limiting the number of words you use to summarize. Counting the words as they are spoken is a powerful way to illustrate this point. Another effective way to teach summarizing is to use "paragraph-shrinking" techniques (Fuchs, Fuchs, Kazlan, & Allen, 1999).

Once you have modeled oral summarizing, you can assign student partners alternate paragraphs from their *Practice Passage* to orally summarize. Then, have the partners practice orally summarizing the whole passage. With additional instruction, this oral summarization practice can be extended to summary writing. After students complete their oral summarizations, ask them to turn over the *Practice Passage* and write a short summary of it.

Paraphrasing

To model paraphrasing, read aloud a *Practice Passage*—paragraph by paragraph—from an overhead transparency. After reading each paragraph, stop and announce, "I can put the information in this paragraph into my own words by saying" Point out to students that it is easier to learn new information when you put it into your own words instead of trying to remember the text's language.

After modeling, have student partners paraphrase alternate paragraphs of their *Practice Passage*. Another effective method for teaching paraphrasing is the "read-cover-recite-check" strategy from the *Skills for School Success Series* (Archer & Gleason, 2002).

Retelling

Read aloud a *Practice Passage* from an overhead transparency. Then, model a brief retelling of the passage, using the main ideas of the paragraphs to formulate the retelling. By using phrases such as "The passage began with ...,"

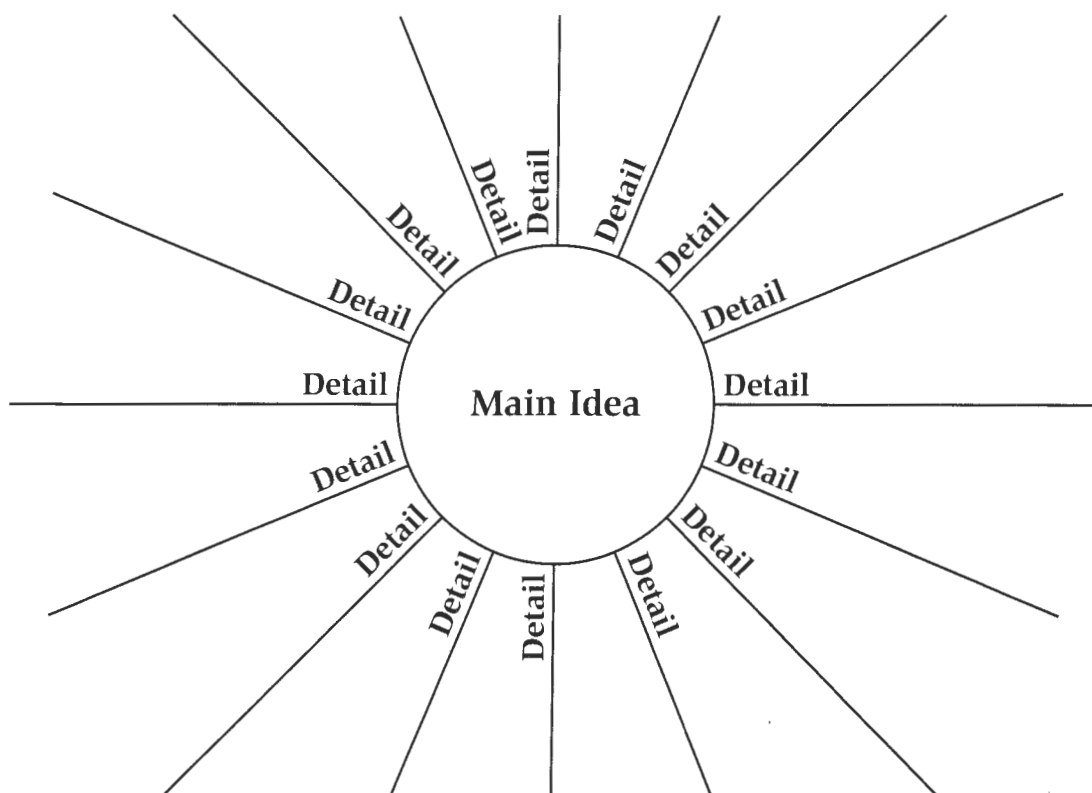
“Next, I read ... ,” and “Then I learned ... ,” you can effectively model retelling of information.

Describing

You can model describing by listing the characteristics, features, and examples of a topic. As you model, include key vocabulary words and phrases generally found in descriptive texts such as “for example,” “characteristics,” “for instance,” “such as,” and “to illustrate.” You may use a spider-web graphic organizer (as in *Figure 8.1*) in which the topic of the passage is listed in a circle in the center and the features are written on lines extending out from the circle, forming a web.

Students can take turns orally describing their *Practice Passage* paragraphs to their partners while the partners take notes on the passage.

Figure 8.1
Spider-Web Graphic Organizer



Learning Expository Text Structure

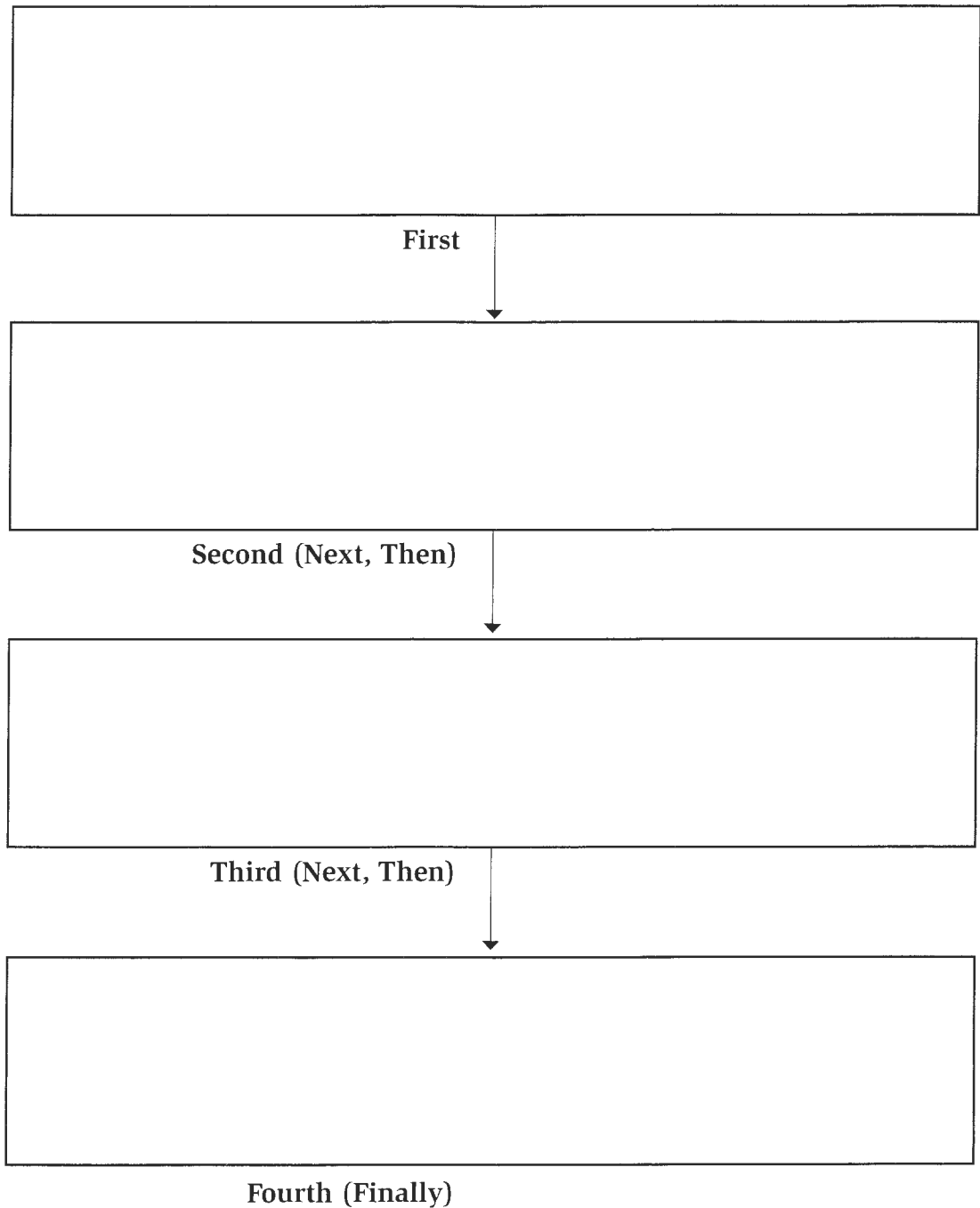
Students can be taught about how text is structured using the following methods:

- Sequencing
- Comparing
- Analyzing cause and effect
- Problem solving

Sequencing

Some of the *Practice Passages* list items or events in numerical or chronological order, or in sequences. When teaching students a comprehension strategy for this type of passage, call attention to key vocabulary words such as “first,” “second,” “third,” “next,” “then,” “finally,” “yesterday,” “today,” “now,” “later,” “before,” and “after.” Extend this sequencing comprehension activity to include writing by using a graphic organizer to list information sequentially (see *Figure 8.2*).

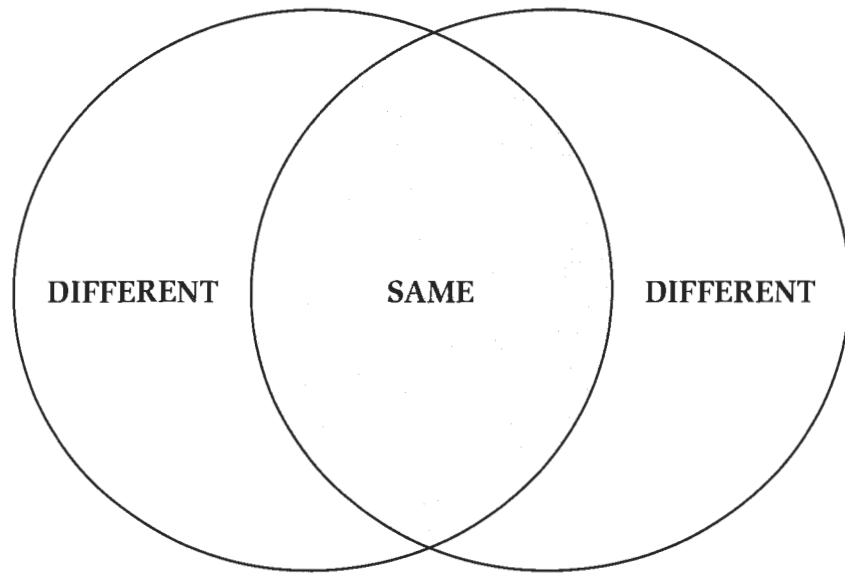
Figure 8.2
Sequencing Graphic Organizer



Comparing

Some of the *Practice Passages* explain how two or more things are alike or different. Call attention to key vocabulary words and phrases in these passages such as “alike,” “same as,” “different from,” “in contrast,” “on the other hand,” “but,” “yet,” “however,” “although,” “opposite of,” “as well as,” “while,” and “unless.” Venn diagrams are excellent graphic organizers to use for showing the similarities and differences in comparison text. A Venn diagram consists of two or more overlapping circles (see *Figure 8.3*).

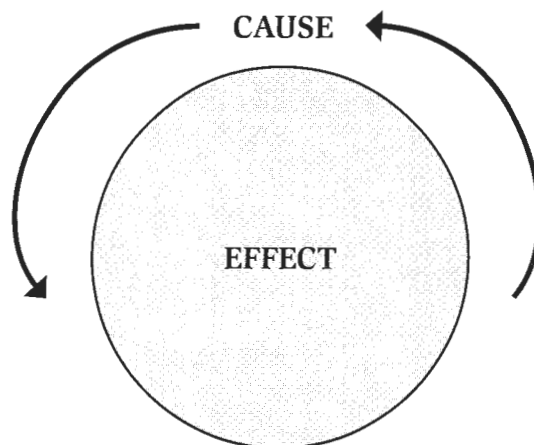
Figure 8.3
Venn Diagram



Analyzing Cause and Effect

Another type of expository text structure lists one or more causes and the resulting effect(s). Key vocabulary words and phrases for this type of text include “consequently,” “because,” “if ... then,” “thus,” “since,” “nevertheless,” “accordingly,” “because of,” “as a result of,” “may be due to,” “therefore,” and “this led to.” A graphic organizer may be used to illustrate cause and effect (see *Figure 8.4*).

Figure 8.4
Cause and Effect Graphic Organizer



Problem-Solving

This type of expository text structure states a problem and lists one or more solutions. Key vocabulary words and phrases include “the problem is,” “the question is,” “furthermore,” “one reason for,” “a solution,” and “another possibility.” An example of a graphic organizer for problem-solving text is shown in *Figure 8.5*.

Figure 8.5
Problem-Solving Graphic Organizer

Problem:
Solutions:

Summary Writing Strategies

Teachers may elect to incorporate summary writing strategies into the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* fluency model. In that case, on the last day of fluency practice, partners write a short summary of the assigned *Practice Passage*. It is recommended that teachers demonstrate summary writing with a *Practice Passage* at a readability level that matches that of the lowest reader in the class.

Materials:

- A copy of the demonstration *Practice Passage* for each student.
- A copy of *Summary Paragraph Frame 1* or *Summary Paragraph Frame 2* (see *Appendix*) for each student.
- An overhead transparency of the demonstration *Practice Passage*.
- An overhead transparency of *Summary Paragraph Frame 1* or *Summary Paragraph Frame 2*.
- A transparency writing pen.

Procedure:

1. Distribute copies of the demonstration *Practice Passage* and *Summary Paragraph Frame 1* or *Summary Paragraph Frame 2* to students.
2. Introduce the summary paragraph frame and discuss the components of the frame.
3. Read the demonstration *Practice Passage* together with students.
4. Model filling in the components of the paragraph frame by thinking aloud.
5. Have students follow along and fill in their paragraph frame.
6. Using the completed paragraph frame, join students in writing summary paragraphs.

Summary Paragraph Frame 1

This passage was about _____. First, I learned _____.
Next, I learned _____. Finally, I learned _____.

Summary Paragraph Frame 2

Topic sentence (name the “who” or the “what”). Tell the most important thing about the “who” or the “what.”

Example:

_____ is/was _____. One important fact is _____.
Another important fact is _____. A final important fact is _____.

Conclusion: More Than Six Minutes a Day

One of the advantages of the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* fluency partner model is that students are able to increase their oral reading fluency in only six minutes of an instructional period. This curriculum's original grouping configuration is a partnership match based on instructional reading and fluency levels. By utilizing this configuration, the partnership is self-supporting—each partner's reading level and cwpn score mirror the other partner's. In this way, partnerships can function independently with little supervision.

However, there might be times when more than six minutes a day must be devoted to fluency practice, as in the following situations:

- On the first day of the week—when partnerships receive a new *Practice Passage*—more time will be required. Each student in the partnership silently reads the entire new *Practice Passage*. If any words are unknown, students consult first with their partners. If neither partner knows a word, the teacher supplies the correct pronunciation.
- Although the program can be easily implemented in a class of struggling readers, an individual fluency program may be more appropriate for some students. In these cases, additional time will be needed for fluency practice.
- Certain grouping configurations, such as guided reading groups, require more than six minutes a day.
- Incorporating additional comprehension activities and/or summary writing will require additional time.

The *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* partnership fluency model works well if partners can be fairly evenly matched. However, some educational settings do not lend themselves to the partnership fluency model. If instructional levels of students are very diverse, it would not be appropriate to assign fluency partners.

Keep in mind that fluency practice is essential for *all* struggling readers. If a particular setting does not lend itself to the partnership model, *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* may be adjusted to become an individualized fluency program. Refer to the “Individual Fluency Programs” section of *Chapter 2* for two individual fluency program options. As an individualized fluency program, the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* model may instead become the ***Sixteen-Minute Solution Intermediate*** model. However, the benefits of daily fluency practice will more than compensate for the additional time required.

SIX MINUTE

Assessments

Using the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* Assessment Passages

The six *Assessment Passages* included in *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate*—Levels 1–6 for first grade to sixth grade—were designed to serve several purposes, and they may be used in a variety of ways. Refer to *Chapter 1: Assessments* for additional information.

Using Assessment Passages to Assess Correct Words Per Minute (cwpm) and to Form Student Partnerships

1. **Select the *Assessment Passage* that matches the current grade level of the students being assessed.** For example, all students in a sixth-grade language arts class should be assessed on the same Level 6 *Assessment Passage*. The reading of *Assessment Passages* should be unpracticed, meaning that students should not silently read the passage before the fluency assessment is conducted.

In the case of remedial or special education students who read significantly below their chronological grade level, select an *Assessment Passage* that is closer to their instructional level. For example, in a special education classroom for grades 4, 5, and 6 in which the majority of students read at the second-grade level, use the Level 2 *Assessment Passage* for assessment. **Note:** All students must read the same *Assessment Passage* so that partnerships may be evenly assigned. However, partnerships will read *Practice Passages* at their independent or instructional level.

2. **Make two copies of the selected *Assessment Passage*, and laminate them or insert them into plastic sleeves.** The assessor uses one copy to mark reading errors and stopping point with an erasable marking pen, and students read from the other copy. Tell students that they will be asked to individually read the selected *Assessment Passage* quickly and carefully for one minute.
3. **Set a timer for one minute, and tell the student to begin reading when he/she is ready.** Avoid saying, “Get ready, get set, go!” Rather, start the timer when the student begins reading. Mark the reading errors the student makes and supply any words the student can’t read after a 3-second wait time. Mark any words supplied by you as errors. Student insertions and self-corrections are *not* counted as errors.
4. **At the end of one minute, stop the student, and mark the last word read.** Subtract the number of reading errors from the total number of words read to compute the correct words per minute (cwpm) rate for the student. Then, transfer the student’s cwpm score to an *Initial Assessment Record* (see *Appendix*). Wipe off the markings on your copy of the *Assessment Passage*, and continue the one-minute timing procedure with the next student.
5. **To form fluency partnerships,** match each student’s cwpm rate to within 10–15 words per minute of another student, with both students reading at the same-grade instructional level.

Using Assessment Passages to Assess Reading Instructional Level

Assessment Passages may also be used to ascertain a student's reading level on that particular grade-level's passage. Again, this should be an unpracticed reading for which the student has no opportunity to read before the assessment begins. **Note:** Since the rationale for this type of assessment is determining *accuracy*—not *fluency*—it is untimed.

The *Determining Reading Levels Chart* (see *Chapter 1*) should be referenced to decide whether or not students are reading the *Assessment Passage* at the independent level, instructional level, or frustration level. The independent level is the one at which a student can read a passage easily and without teacher assistance or instruction. The instructional level is the one at which a student can read a passage, but some teacher guidance and instruction are necessary for comprehension. The instructional level is the most important one to determine, since it is at this level that learning truly occurs. The frustration level is the one at which a student struggles to read a passage and little, if any, learning will occur.

In matching students for fluency partnerships, both students should be able to read the same grade-level *Assessment Passage* at an instructional level. Conduct the assessments as directed in steps 1–4 in the previous section, but do not time students. After each student reads the *Assessment Passage*, use the *Determining Reading Levels Chart* in *Chapter 1* to establish his/her reading level of the passage. **Note:** If it is quite apparent that the *Assessment Passage* is too difficult for a student to read, and the student is at his/her frustration level, stop the assessment immediately. Select a *Assessment Passage* that is at least two grade levels below the current passage, and begin the assessment again.

Using Assessment Passages for Pretest and Posttest Data Collection

Assessment Passages can be used as well to document fluency progress over time after conducting the *Six-Minute Solution Intermediate* program. Select the same *Assessment Passage* you used for the original baseline data collection, and have the initial fluency scores available for comparison. (This information would appear on the *Initial Assessment Record*.)

Conduct the one-minute timing assessment with individual students in the usual manner, and calculate their cwpm scores. Subtract the original cwpm from the new cwpm to determine the number of words gained per minute resulting from fluency practice. Share this reading progress with the student and the parents, using the *Fluency Assessment Report* (see *Appendix*).

Using Assessment Passages to Determine Progress in Reading Level for Making Instructional Decisions

Finally, *Assessment Passages* may be used not only to determine student progress in reading fluency but also to document reading level gains.

If a student's *Fluency Graph* confirms that he/she is reading consistently at or above grade-level, select the next level *Assessment Passage* and conduct an unpracticed fluency assessment. Use the *Determining Reading Levels Chart* in *Chapter 1* to ascertain an increase in the student's instructional reading level. If it has increased, assign a *Assessment Passage* at the new level.

Assessment Passages

- Level 1 Birds: Our Feathered Friends
- Level 2 Fish Facts
- Level 3 Reptiles: Cold-Blooded Animals
- Level 4 Marsupials
- Level 5 Insects
- Level 6 Mammals: The Highest Animal Class

Birds: Our Feathered Friends

0 There are thousands of different birds. Birds have two legs and two
12 wings. Some birds are very small. Others are large. Birds are the only
25 animals that have feathers. Feathers can be any color. They keep birds
37 warm and dry. Flight feathers are very smooth.

45 Most birds can fly. Birds can fly because they have very light
57 bones. Their strong muscles move the wings. The tail helps the bird
69 to steer in the sky. Different birds have different shaped wings. This
81 is because birds live in different places. Most birds live in trees. Other
94 birds live high in the hills. Some live on the ground. Some birds fly long
109 distances. They live one place in the summer. They live someplace else in
122 the winter.

124 Some birds cannot fly. They are too big. The biggest bird is
136 an ostrich. It can grow to be 8 feet tall and can weigh 300 pounds.
151 An ostrich has strong legs. It can run very fast. Some birds are good
165 swimmers. Penguins are birds that can swim. They can swim very fast.
177 They use their wings to swim.
183

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Fish Facts

0 There are many kinds of fish. They come in many colors, shapes,
12 and sizes. Some fish are as small as tadpoles. Others are larger than
25 crocodiles. Some fish are thin, while others are fat.

34 All fish have three important things in common. They all live in
46 water. All fish have fins to control the direction of their movement. They
59 all use gills to get oxygen from the water.

68 Some fish live in the ocean. They are saltwater fish. Other fish live
81 in rivers and lakes. These fish are freshwater fish.

90 Fish are good swimmers. They propel themselves through the water
100 by moving their tails from side to side. Fish use their fins to steer. Some
115 fish have only one fin. But most fish have more than one fin.

128 Gills are water-breathing organs. They are located in the fish's
139 mouth. The fish takes in water through its mouth. The water goes
151 through gill slits. These help the fish to get oxygen from the water as it
166 passes through.

168

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Reptiles: Cold-Blooded Animals

0 Reptiles have lived on earth for a long time. They have been here
13 for more than 300 million years. Reptiles are animals. They are cold-
25 blooded. This means that their body temperature changes. When it is
36 cold outside, reptiles are cold. When it is hot outside, reptiles are hot.
49 Reptiles eat 30 to 50 times less food than mammals. This is because they
63 do not have to burn fuel for energy. Reptiles have dry, scaly skin. Their
77 skin protects them from drying out.

83 There are many kinds of reptiles. More than 8,000 types of reptiles
95 live on earth. Reptiles live all over the world. Some reptiles live on land.
109 Others live in the water. Living reptiles fall into four classes. Turtles are
122 one class of reptiles. They are reptiles with a shell. Turtles are the oldest
136 living reptile group. Crocodiles are another class of reptiles. Alligators
146 are included in this group. Lizards are a type of reptile. Snakes are
159 reptiles, too.

161

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Marsupials

0 A marsupial is a type of mammal. Unlike other mammals,
10 marsupials have pouches. They carry their babies in their pouches. Most
21 of the marsupials in the world live in Australia.

30 Kangaroos are marsupials. They have strong back legs and can jump
41 long distances. Kangaroos have strong tails. Their tail is used for balance.
53 The red kangaroo can grow to be about seven feet tall. They can weigh
67 more than 200 pounds. They move fast. Sometimes, they travel at 40
79 miles per hour.

82 Another Australian marsupial is the koala bear. The koalas live in
93 trees. They have thick, gray fur, a black nose, and no tail. Koalas look
107 very cuddly. They eat only leaves from a gum tree. The leaves are juicy.
121 Koalas do not drink water.

126 Wombats are also marsupials. They are Australian rodents.
134 Wombats live in holes in the ground. They sleep during the day and come
148 out at night. Wombats' diet consists of grass and plant roots.

159 Opossums are the only marsupials that live outside Australia.
168 Opossums look like large rats. They have long faces and tails. Opossums
180 eat eggs, fruit, insects, and small animals. When they are scared, they
192 fall to the ground and pretend to be dead. This is how the term "playing
207 possum" originated.

209

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Insects

0 Insects belong to a huge group of animals. This group is called
12 arthropods. All arthropods have a hard outer coat called an exoskeleton.
23 This *exoskeleton* protects the soft insides of an arthropod's body.

33 An adult insect's body is divided into three sections: a head, a
45 thorax, and an abdomen. The insect's head contains mouthparts, eyes,
55 and antennae. The thorax is the middle part of an insect's body. Three
68 pairs of jointed legs are found on the thorax. Insects have six legs. Two
82 pairs of wings are also attached to the thorax. The abdomen is the bottom
96 part of an insect. It is the biggest part of the body.

108 Most insects undergo a change. This change is called a
118 *metamorphosis*. The metamorphosis has four stages: egg, larva, pupa,
127 and adult. Most insects lay eggs. Each egg then turns into a larva. After
141 several molts, the larva enters the pupa stage. During this stage, it does
154 not eat or move. When the pupa stage ends, the adult insect emerges.

167 There are thousands of insects in the world. More than 900,000
178 kinds have been found. That is more than three times as many other
191 animal types put together. Many more new insects are discovered every
202 year.
203

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Mammals: The Highest Animal Class

0 Mammals are the highest class of animals. There are about
 10 5,000 living mammal species. Mammals have several characteristics in
 19 common. All mammals are warm-blooded. That means that their body
 30 temperature remains constant regardless of the temperature of their
 39 environment. The majority of all mammals have bodies partially or
 49 wholly covered with hair. Most female mammals give birth to live young.
 61 They nourish their offspring with milk secreted by mammary glands.
 71 Mammals have hearts with four chambers. They have three middle-ear
 82 bones: the malleus, incus, and stapes.

88 Mammals have four kinds of diets. Herbivores are plant-eaters.
 98 This group includes beavers, cows, horses, and pandas. Carnivores are
 108 meat-eaters. Whales, dolphins, dogs, tigers, and lions fall into this group.
 120 Omnivores eat plants and meat. Humans, raccoons, and some bears fall
 131 into this category. Insectivores eat insects. Aardvarks and anteaters are
 141 examples of insectivores.

144 There are many different kinds of mammals. The blue whale is the
 156 largest of all mammals. African elephants are the largest land mammals.
 167 In terms of speed, the cheetah is the fastest mammal, while the sloth
 180 is the slowest. The giraffe is the tallest mammal. Pygmy shrews and
 192 bumblebee bats are the smallest mammals. The striped skunk is the
 203 smelliest mammal of all.

207

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability

Directions: This is an individually administered sight-word reading assessment. Because this is a measure of sight-word knowledge, students need to recognize the words very quickly. Give a copy of the Student Form to the student to read. Choose a word list that is two to three grade levels below the student's current grade level as the starting point. Ask the student to read each word aloud. Keep the student moving down the lists. Do not allow more than three to five seconds on any word. Rather, tell the student to go on to the next word. Mark the word skipped as incorrect. Stop the assessment when the student has missed three or more words in a list. Record the highest grade level for each of the three levels (independent, instructional, and frustration) in the Errors & Reading Levels table when testing is completed.

[illegible]

San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Record the highest grade level for each:

INDEPENDENT _____ INSTRUCTIONAL _____ FRUSTRATION _____

Preprimer		Grade Three		Grade Seven		Grade Eleven	
see	_____	city	_____	amber	_____	galore	_____
play	_____	middle	_____	dominion	_____	rotunda	_____
me	_____	moment	_____	sundry	_____	capitalism	_____
at	_____	frightened	_____	capillary	_____	prevaricate	_____
run	_____	exclaimed	_____	impetuous	_____	visible	_____
go	_____	several	_____	blight	_____	exonerate	_____
and	_____	lonely	_____	wrest	_____	superannuate	_____
look	_____	drew	_____	enumerate	_____	luxuriate	_____
can	_____	since	_____	daunted	_____	piebald	_____
here	_____	straight	_____	condescend	_____	crunch	_____
Primer		Grade Four		Grade Eight			
you	_____	decided	_____	capacious	_____		
come	_____	served	_____	limitation	_____		
not	_____	amazed	_____	pretext	_____		
with	_____	silent	_____	intrigue	_____		
jump	_____	wrecked	_____	delusion	_____		
help	_____	improved	_____	immaculate	_____		
is	_____	certainly	_____	ascent	_____		
work	_____	entered	_____	acrid	_____		
are	_____	realized	_____	binocular	_____		
this	_____	interrupted	_____	embankment	_____		
Grade One		Grade Five		Grade Nine			
road	_____	scanty	_____	conscientious	_____		
live	_____	business	_____	isolation	_____		
thank	_____	develop	_____	molecule	_____		
when	_____	considered	_____	ritual	_____		
bigger	_____	discussed	_____	momentous	_____		
how	_____	behaved	_____	vulnerable	_____		
always	_____	splendid	_____	kinship	_____		
night	_____	acquainted	_____	conservatism	_____		
spring	_____	escaped	_____	jaunty	_____		
today	_____	grim	_____	inventive	_____		
Grade Two		Grade Six		Grade Ten			
our	_____	bridge	_____	zany	_____		
please	_____	commercial	_____	jerkin	_____		
myself	_____	abolish	_____	nausea	_____		
town	_____	trucker	_____	gratuitous	_____		
early	_____	apparatus	_____	linear	_____		
send	_____	elementary	_____	inept	_____		
wide	_____	comment	_____	legality	_____		
believe	_____	necessity	_____	aspen	_____		
quietly	_____	gallery	_____	amnesty	_____		
carefully	_____	relativity	_____	barometer	_____		

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San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability

see play me at run go and look can here	exclaimed several lonely drew since straight	daunted condescend
you come not with jump help is work are this	decided served amazed silent wrecked improved certainly entered realized interrupted	capacious limitation pretext intrigue delusion immaculate ascent acid binocular embankment
road live thank when bigger how always night spring today	scanty business develop considered discussed behaved splendid acquainted escaped grim	conscientious isolation molecule ritual momentous vulnerable kinship conservatism jaunty inventive
our please myself town early send wide believe quietly carefully	bridge commercial abolish trucker apparatus elementary comment necessity gallery relativity	zany jerkin nausea gratuitous linear inept legality aspen amnesty barometer
city middle moment frightened	amber dominion sundry capillary impetuous blight wrest enumerate	galore rotunda capitalism prevaricate visible exonerate superannuate luxuriate piebald crunch

SIX MINUTE

Fluency Building Sheets

Level 1 Practice Passages

- 101 All About Plants
- 102 Mexican Hat Dance
- 103 Cat Families: It's All Relative
- 104 Rome Becomes an Empire
- 105 Flying Fish
- 106 Railroads in the West
- 107 Trees: Our Helpers
- 108 The Moon: Earth's Natural Satellite
- 109 Stars and Stripes: The First American Flag
- 110 Gifts from the Ancient Greeks
- 111 The Roaring '20s: The Age of Jazz
- 112 Hawaiian Islands
- 113 Oil: Black Gold
- 114 The Sun and Energy
- 115 Plants Are Alike and Different, Too!
- 116 Gold Rush in California
- 117 The Nile River in Ancient Egypt
- 118 Log Cabins: Pioneer Homes
- 119 Eli Whitney and the Cotton Gin
- 120 Alex Haley: Author
- 121 Earth: Hometown Planet
- 122 Bruce Lee: Martial Arts Actor
- 123 Nat King Cole: Unforgettable Singer
- 124 The Secret of Silk
- 125 Native American Homes

All About Plants

0 There are many plants on our earth. Plants can be big. Plants can
13 be small. We can't even see some plants. They are too small. Plants need
27 many things to grow. They need sunlight. Other plants need a lot of
40 sunlight. Others need very little sunlight. Plants also need water to grow.
52 Just like sunlight, some plants need a lot of water. Other plants need very
66 little water. A cactus can live without a lot of water.

77 Plants also need food from the soil to grow. Plants use their roots
90 to get food and water from the soil. The roots also hold up the plant. The
106 leaves make food for the plant. They use the sun to make food. Stems
120 are different on plants. The stem holds up the leaves and flowers on the
134 plant. It also carries water and food to the plant. The stem of a tree is
150 hard and strong. The stem of a flower can bend easily. Plants have seeds
164 to grow new plants. Some seeds are very small. Other seeds are in fruit
178 that grow on the plants. Some plants have flowers. Other plants do not
191 have flowers. Plants give us many things. They are good to us.

203

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Practice Passages **71**

Mexican Hat Dance

0 A fiesta is a party. People dress up to go to a fiesta. They wear
15 bright colors. Many people dance at fiestas. One dance is the Mexican Hat
28 Dance. It is a lot of fun. A big hat is put on the floor. It is a sombrero. It is
49 made of straw. It has a wide brim.

57 People dance around the hat. Each person has a partner. Partners
68 face each other. They hold hands. Each person jumps and taps their right
81 heel in front. Then they jump and tap their left heel in front. They clap
96 two times. Partners hook right elbows. They swing each other in a circle.
109 Then they change directions. The dance is repeated until the music stops.
121

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Cat Families: It's All Relative

0 Did you know that all cats are related? Small house cats and wild
 13 lions belong to the same family. They have a lot of things in common. For
 28 example, all cats have long claws. They use these claws to grip and tear.
 42 Cats keep their claws sharp by scraping them on rough things like tree
 55 trunks. Pet owners give house cats scratching posts to use. All cats walk
 68 on their toes. Their heels do not touch the ground. Cats have five toes
 82 on each front foot. But their back feet only have four toes. Small pads on
 97 cats' feet help them to move quietly. Most cats hunt at night. They have
 111 a good sense of smell, sharp hearing, and can see well at night. Cats are
 126 graceful animals. They are able to climb and balance themselves very
 137 well. Cats are able to run quickly and make great leaps.

148 Cats that live in homes are called house cats. Cats are not as
 161 friendly as dogs. But they are neat and need less care than dogs. There
 175 are two kinds of house cats. One kind has long hair and the other has
 190 short hair. Pet cats should be given a warm, dry box for sleeping. They
 204 need two or three meals each day.

211 House cats make very good pets for some people.
 220

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Rome Becomes an Empire

0 The Romans wanted a big empire. The army was very big. Soldiers
12 signed up for twenty years. Each soldier did the job well. Some were
25 archers. There were spear throwers. Others were horse riders. The army
36 had many parts. Each part was called a legion. A legion had six thousand
50 men. There were nurses, cooks, and arrow makers. Often there were long
62 battles. They did not need to return to Rome for supplies.

73 The Romans built roads. This helped them to control the empire.
84 There were more than fifty thousand miles of roads. The roads were built
97 to last. The roads had three layers. First, the men dug the road. The bed
112 of the road was filled with rocks. They mixed gravel and concrete. This
125 was put on the rocks. Flat paving stones were on top. Stone curbs were
139 on each side. They dug drainage ditches. There was a ditch on each side
153 of the road. Many people used the roads. Farmers used the roads for
166 trade. The army used the roads to get places fast.

176 The Romans wanted to keep the empire. The empire spread to many
188 places. It was very big.

193

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Flying Fish

0 Did you know that some fish can fly? It is true! They do not really
15 fly like birds. But some fish can glide through the air. These fish are
29 called flying fish. They have long fins on either side of their bodies. When
43 a flying fish leaves the water, it spreads its fins. The air catches under the
58 fins. The air under the fins helps the fish glide. Flying fish can glide at
73 speeds of 40 miles per hour. They can go as far as 30 meters before they
89 splash down.

91 The flying fish also has a special tail. Its tail is in two parts. Each
106 part of its tail can move very fast. Those two tail parts help the flying fish
122 to swim very fast. The tail also helps to propel the fish out of the water.
138 You may ask yourself, "Why would a fish want to fly?" The reason is that
153 the flying fish is trying to get away from a bigger fish. When a flying fish
169 is being chased, it swims fast to the top of the water. Then it leaps out of
186 the water. As it leaps, the flying fish spreads its fins and glides away from
201 danger.

202

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Railroads in the West

0 Before railroads, it took a long time to go from New York to San
14 Diego. Most people used a horse and wagon to cross the U.S. Some
27 people sailed around Cape Horn. Either way, it took three months. People
39 wanted to travel faster.

43 The U.S. had no money to build the train tracks. So the U.S. gave
57 two groups land. Right-of-way land was for the train tracks. The U.S. also
72 gave large pieces of land for every mile of track that was laid. This land
87 could be sold. The groups sold some of the land. The groups used the
101 money to buy materials. Workers had to be paid.

110 The Union Pacific group started in Nebraska. They laid the tracks
121 toward the west. The Central Pacific group began on the West Coast. They
134 laid the tracks to the east.

140 Both groups worked hard. They had to cross rivers. Bridges were
151 built. There were tall mountains. The men had to dig tunnels. It was not
165 easy work. The tracks met in Utah. The last spike was made of gold. A
180 silver hammer was used. The track was finished.

188 Now people could cross the U.S. in one week. More people moved
200 to the West.

203

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Trees: Our Helpers

0 Trees help all of us. Trees give us wood. We use the wood to build
15 our houses. We have doors on our houses made from wood. The chairs
28 we sit on are made from wood. Our houses have many things made from
42 wood. Trees keep us dry if it is raining. Trees also keep us cool in the
58 shade with their leaves.

62 Paper is made from trees. Many other things come from trees. Fruits
74 such as apples and oranges grow on trees. Cherries and peaches come
86 from trees, too. Walnuts and almonds grow on trees. Maple syrup for
98 pancakes comes from maple trees. Birds live in trees. Many animals also
110 live in trees.

113 Trees help us when we are sick. Many medicines are made from
125 trees. When trees die, they still help us. They help to make new soil for
140 seeds to grow. They also become homes for animals such as rabbits. Bees
152 put their hives in fallen trees. Trees help the earth, too. The tree's leaves
166 work with the sun to make oxygen. Without oxygen, we could not live.
179 Trees are very important to us. Trees help us all in many, many ways. We
194 should take care of our trees because they take care of us.

205

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

The Moon: Earth's Natural Satellite

0 On a clear night, the moon can be seen. The moon is a bright
 14 object in the sky. Only the sun is brighter. The moon is thousands of
 28 miles away. The moon is much smaller than the earth. The moon travels
 41 around the earth. It takes about 27 days to make one orbit. Each night it
 56 is in a different place in its trip around the earth. More or less light from
 72 the sun gets to the moon. The moon reflects sunlight. Each night the
 85 moon looks different. Sometimes it looks like a big ball. Other nights it
 98 looks like a thin light. Sometimes there is no moon at all. It is a full moon
 115 when the entire surface of the moon facing the sun reflects sunlight.

127 The moon is not like the earth. No one lives on the moon. It is
 142 very rocky. There are no plants or animals. During the day it is very hot.
 157 Sometimes it is two hundred degrees. At night, it is very cold. It can be
 172 250 degrees below zero.

176 Men have visited the moon. They had to wear space suits. They did
 189 not stay long. They put up a U.S. flag. Moon rocks were brought back
 203 to Earth. There is not much on the moon. People have always enjoyed
 216 looking at the moon at night. They probably always will.

226

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Stars and Stripes: The First American Flag

0 It is said that Betsy Ross made the first U.S. flag. It was called the
 15 Stars and Stripes. It had thirteen rows of stripes. The top row was red.
 29 The next row was white. The next row was red and so on. In the top left
 46 was a field of blue. There were thirteen stars. Each star had five points.
 60 One point was upward. They were arranged in a circle. At that time, there
 74 were thirteen colonies. Each star was for a colony. The first flag was
 87 raised on July 1, 1776.

92 When the U.S. became a nation, the stars stood for each state. As
 105 the U.S. grew, a star was added for each state. At first, a stripe was also
 121 added. One time the flag had fifteen stripes and fifteen stars. Then the
 134 U.S. decided to keep the thirteen stripes. The stripes were for the thirteen
 147 colonies. When a state joined the U.S., a new star was added. The order
 161 of the stars was changed many times. Hawaii became a state in 1959. The
 175 last star was added for Hawaii.

181 Now there are fifty stars on the flag. The flag still has thirteen
 194 stripes. If another state joined the U.S., a star would be added.
 206

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Practice Passages **79**

Gifts from the Ancient Greeks

0 The ancient Greeks lived close to the sea. Many lived on islands.
 12 The farmers grew crops all year. The winters were mild. It was sunny in
 26 the summer. They grew grapes, olives, wheat, and barley. The Greeks had
 38 many ships. They traded with others. To make it easy, they used coins.
 51 The coins were made of gold and silver.

59 The Greeks had city-states. There was no king. The power was in
 72 the hands of the citizens. There were rich and poor people. The men
 85 citizens voted. They made the rules. When someone broke a rule, they
 97 had a trial. The people served on juries. Most people lived in the city.
 111 Some farmed land around the city. Sometimes they had wars. The wars
 123 were over land. Some people moved. They made new city-states.

134 The Greeks liked to have fun. They also wanted to honor their
 146 gods. Every four years they had sports events. There were foot races and
 159 wrestling. They threw discs. The sports events were called the Olympics.
 170 Two times each year they went to plays. The dramas were very good. The
 184 plays told stories about gods and history. Most of the plays were very sad.
 198 A few were very funny. They were always sad at the end. A jury voted for
 214 the best play.

217 The Greeks had many good ideas. Many movies are based on their
 229 stories. The name and dates are changed. People like to go to sports
 242 events. Coins are used to buy and sell things. Citizens vote and make
 255 rules.

256

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

The Roaring '20s: The Age of Jazz

0 After World War I, the U.S. was ready for change. People started
12 to change in the way they did things. They wanted to find new ways to
27 express themselves. Music was one way to enjoy life. The music that
39 most people in the U.S. liked was jazz. They saw jazz as a way to break
55 away from old rules. It was a way to be free.

66 Black people in the U.S. created jazz. It started in New Orleans. It
79 grew out of music called the blues. The blues was based on the hard life
94 of most blacks. The music told sad stories. It helped people cope with
107 hard times. Most of the black people who played jazz had no formal
120 schooling in music. Yet, they were great performers.

128 There was no right way to play jazz. It was about how people felt. It
143 was based on a theme or musical idea. The players chased a tune up and
158 down the scales as they played. This gave the player a sense of being free.

173 At the same time, young women wanted to be free of old ideas.
186 They cast out long, full dresses. They put on short skirts. They had
199 loose-fitting clothes. The young women cut their hair short. Women
210 wore makeup. They danced to jazz music. These women were called
221 "flappers."

222 Today women wear clothes they like. They cut their hair many
233 ways. People still like to listen to jazz.

241

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Hawaiian Islands

0 Captain Cook was the first white man to visit Hawaii. He landed in
 13 the islands in 1778. The islands were very pretty. There was sun every
 26 day. Palm trees grew there. There were flowers all year. Ships going to
 39 and from Asia stopped in the islands. Sometimes sailors jumped ship.
 50 They did not want to leave.

56 A king ruled Hawaii. Farmers from the U.S. moved to the islands.
 68 They grew pineapples and sugar. The king let the U.S. build a navy base.
 82 The king died. His sister became the queen. She was removed from the
 95 throne. The islands became part of the U.S. The navy base grew larger.
 108 More people moved to the islands. Hawaii became a state in 1959.

120 Many people like to visit the islands. They come by plane and ship.
 133 The sun shines all year. There are lots of palm trees and flowers. Birds
 147 live in the trees. The birds sing all of the time. People like to play in the
 164 sun. They swim in the sea. A few like to surf. Many people play golf.
 179 Some like to hike in the hills. Most like to listen to the music and watch
 195 the dances. The islands are fun to visit.

203

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Oil: Black Gold

0 Oil is sometimes called “black gold.” Oil is used for many things. It
 13 is worth a lot of money. Oil made some people very rich. At one time oil
 29 was not worth much. People did not like oil on their land. It was dirty.
 44 Oil smelled bad. Plants did not grow well near oil. That was two hundred
 58 years ago.

60 The first oil well was in Pennsylvania. People used oil as a
 72 medicine. This did not work well. Oil was also used to grease metal parts.
 86 This made machines run smoother. When oil is heated, dirt and grime
 98 go to the bottom. The oil at the top is called refined oil. People found
 113 uses for refined oil. It was used for lamps and stoves. Oil was sold in the
 129 grocery stores and door-to-door. People did not need to make candles
 142 or buy whale oil. Gasoline is high-grade refined oil. About one hundred
 155 years ago, people started to use gas for cars. Oil was found in the West.
 170 People started to search for oil. They drilled wells. At first oil was shipped
 184 east in barrels. Then they used railroad tank cars. Finally, pipelines were
 196 laid. Oil is also shipped in big oil tankers.

205 Today there are many uses for oil. It is used to heat houses, for fuel,
 220 and as a cleaner. Now people would like to find oil on their land. They
 235 would be very rich.
 239

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Practice Passages **83**

The Sun and Energy

0 The sun is a star. It is a star like the thousands of stars seen at
 16 night. The sun is the closest star to earth. It is 93 million miles away.
 31 The sun is at the center of the solar system. It is much bigger than the
 47 earth. It is made of gas. The gas is on fire. In the center, there are many
 64 explosions. The sun is hotter than hot. The heat causes a lot of light.
 78 It takes about eight minutes for light to go from the sun to the earth.
 93 Animals and plants need the energy that comes from the sunlight.
 104 Light from the sun gives us energy. Plants need sunlight to grow.
 116 Trees grow tall. People cut down trees for the wood. When wood is
 129 burned, energy is released. Bugs and animals eat the plants. People eat
 141 plants and animals to give them energy. Some plants and animals die.
 153 They stay in the ground for millions of years. After a while, they turn into
 168 oil. Oil is used to run cars and trucks. The heat from the sun warms the
 184 air near the ground. The air gets warm and rises. This causes wind. Wind
 198 is a form of energy. The sunlight gives us many forms of energy.
 211

Total Words Read _____
 - Errors _____
 = CWPM _____

Plants Are Alike and Different, Too!

0 There are so many plants on our earth. When we look at them,
13 they all seem so different from one another. Yet, all of these very different
27 plants are alike in some ways.

33 All plants need air, water, light, and minerals. Plants are alike in
45 other ways, too. All plants have some sort of roots. Some roots may be
59 close to the soil's surface. Some roots may go deeply down into the earth.
73 Some roots may even grow on top of the soil. But all plants have roots.

88 All plants have stems. The stems may look different from one
99 another. They may be short and narrow. They may be tall and thick.
112 There may be many stems on a plant, or very few stems. The stems on
127 trees are hard. The stems on roses have sharp thorns and are narrow. The
141 stems on daisies are short and bend easily. The stems are a part of all
156 plants. They may be different, but all plants have stems.

166 All plants have leaves. The leaves, just like the stems and roots,
178 are different from one another. Some leaves are large, like those on palm
191 trees. Some leaves are small and narrow. The spines on a cactus are
204 its leaves. The pine needles on a pine tree are its leaves. Just like roots
219 and stems, all plants have leaves, but they are very different from one
232 another.

233

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Gold Rush in California

0 In 1848, gold was found in California. It was found in a river.
 13 People wanted to be rich. They wanted to find gold. Most of the people
 27 lived in the East. People wanted to move west. They wanted to be
 40 the first to get gold. There was a rush to find gold. Some people put
 55 everything in wagons. Horses and oxen pulled the wagons. It was hard to
 68 travel in wagons. It was a long trip. They had to cross rivers. The deserts
 83 had no water. The mountains were tall. It took three months to get to
 97 the gold fields. Some people came by ship. The ships sailed around Cape
 110 Horn. Everyone wanted to get rich.

116 By 1850, many people lived in the West. People looked for gold in
 129 the rivers. Some people dug mines. Mines were in the mountains and in
 142 the deserts. A few people found gold. Some people opened stores. They
 154 sold things to the miners. Some storeowners became very rich. Some
 165 people farmed. They sold their goods to the miners. Soon there was not
 178 much gold left. People found other jobs. Most people liked the West.
 190 They liked the sunshine. They did not move back East.
 200

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

The Nile River in Ancient Egypt

0 The Nile River is in Egypt. It is the longest river in the world.

14 The Nile is four thousand miles long. The river flows north. Egypt gets
27 almost no rain. On both sides of the river, there is a desert. There are tall
43 mountains in Central Africa. This is where the river begins. Each year it
56 rains and the snow melts. The level of the Nile rises.

67 A long time ago, there were no dams on the Nile. Each year, the
81 level of the Nile rose. The water flowed over the banks of the river. There
96 were big floods. Black river mud covered the land. The mud was good
109 for growing crops. Farmers used the water for crops. They dug ditches to
122 move the water. Little dams were built in the ditches. Farmer saved the
135 water for the crops.

139 The river had many other uses. Boats sailed on the Nile. Animals
151 lived along the river. There were ducks, little birds, and fish. One river
179 plant was useful. Papyrus is reed. It is a tall, thin plant. The plant grows
194 wild by the river. It was used for boats, baskets, and shoes. The plant was
209 cut into thin layers. This made a kind of paper. The Nile River was very
224 useful.

225

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Log Cabins: Pioneer Homes

0 In the U.S., log cabins were home for many people. During the
12 1700s and the 1800s, many people lived in log cabins. Most of the log
26 cabins were on farms or in the woods. People built log cabins because
39 there were lots of trees.

44 A log cabin was simple to make. An ax was needed to make a log
59 cabin. The trees were cut down. The logs were notched. Then logs were
72 joined at the corners. The logs are put together to make a square room.
86 Log cabins were not big. They had one room. A chimney was at one end
101 of the room. The chimney was made of rocks. The rocks were piled up
115 high. Mud was put in the holes between the rocks. A family could make a
130 log cabin in a few days.

136 Log cabins were not big. They were only as long and wide as tall
150 trees. Some people made the log cabin bigger. They put boards in the
163 rafters. This made a loft. They used ladders to get to the loft. Children
177 slept in the loft. Some people built another log cabin room. Many people
190 liked to live in log cabins.

196

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Eli Whitney and the Cotton Gin

0 Cotton is an important crop. It grows on a plant in pods. Fluffy
13 white fiber and black seeds are in the pod. It used to be hard to get the
30 seeds off the fiber. In 1793, Eli Whitney made the cotton gin. The gin
44 makes it easy to get the seeds off the fiber.

54 The cotton gin looks like a box. It is open at the top. There are little
70 slits down one side. Cotton fiber and seeds are placed in the box. There
84 is a roller outside the box. The roller is on one side of the box. Wire teeth
101 are around the roller. People can turn the roller. When the roller is turned
115 the teeth go into the box through the slits. The fiber in the box is caught
131 in the wire teeth. As the teeth come out of the box, they pull fibers out.
147 The seeds are wider than the slits. The seeds stay in the box. Another
161 roller turns the other way. It takes the fibers from the first roller. The first
176 roller turns back into the box. The first roller gets more fiber. Now it is
191 easy to get the seeds off the fiber.

199 The cotton fiber is made into thread. The thread is used to make
212 cloth. People like cotton clothes. Cotton clothes are cool in the summer.
224 They are easy to wash. There is a demand for lots of cotton. Many
238 farmers grow cotton.

241

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Practice Passages **89**

Alex Haley: Author

0 Alex was born in New York. When he was little, he moved. He lived
 14 near his grandmother. She told stories. They were about their family. Alex
 26 liked to hear them. One story was about Kunta. Kunta lived in Africa. He
 40 came to the U.S. on a slave ship.

48 When Alex grew up, he went to sea. At sea, he wrote many stories.
 62 He tried to sell his stories. At first, no one would buy them. After 8 years,
 78 he sold a story.

82 Alex wanted to know if his family stories were true. So he went
 95 to Africa. He talked to many people. The stories were true. Alex wrote
 108 about his family. He wrote many stories. It took him 12 years. Alex put
 122 the stories together. They became a book. The book was "Roots." It was
 135 the story of Alex's roots. People liked the book. Stores sold lots of copies.
 149 "Roots" became a TV show. It won many awards. The book made people
 162 think. It made them think about their own roots.

171

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Earth: Hometown Planet

0 The earth is one of the nine planets. It is the third planet from the
 15 sun. It is also the fifth largest planet. As far as we know, Earth is the only
 32 planet where there is life. There are many reasons for this. Earth is made
 46 up of land and water. There is more water than land on Earth. More than
 61 half of Earth is water. Humans need water to live. Earth is the only planet
 76 where water is in liquid form. That is why there are oceans on Earth.
 90 Oceans help keep the temperature stable. The greenhouse effect helps to
 101 warm the earth. The earth is not too hot or cold for life. The earth's air
 117 has oxygen. The earth's air also has carbon dioxide. Both are important
 129 for life.

131 The earth is four to five billion years old. But the surface of the
 145 earth is very young. That means that it has changed often since it was
 159 formed. The earth is a very big planet. It is also the densest of all the
 175 planets. The earth turns around in a circle. It turns once a day. The earth
 190 goes around the sun. When the earth turns to the sun, it is day. When it
 206 turns away from the sun, it is night.

214

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Bruce Lee: Martial Arts Actor

0 Bruce Lee was born in the U.S. in 1940. His family then moved to
14 China. Bruce grew up in Hong Kong. His parents were actors. Bruce also
27 acted in movies. Life in Hong Kong was hard for Bruce. He learned Kung
41 Fu to defend himself.

45 Bruce moved back to the U.S. when he was 19. He finished high
58 school. Then he went to college. He became a Kung Fu master. Bruce
71 opened a Kung Fu school. Many students came to Bruce's school. They
83 wanted to learn from the best. Bruce showed them how to do two-finger
97 push-ups. He taught them how to break boards with one kick.

109 Bruce became famous. He starred on a TV show. He made action
121 movies. People loved to watch his movies. His most famous was "Enter
133 the Dragon."

135 Sadly, Bruce did not live long. He died suddenly in 1973. The cause
148 was brain swelling. Bruce had a short life. But his movies keep him alive
162 in the hearts of his fans.

168

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Nat King Cole: Unforgettable Singer

0 Nat King Cole was born in 1917. He came from a poor family. Nat
14 was one of 13 children. Nat's father was a minister. His mother taught
27 him to play the piano. Nat played for his father's church. He was a very
42 good piano player.

45 When he grew up, he played in a band. The band was the Nat King
60 Cole Trio. They played in small bars. One night, the owner of the bar
74 asked Nat to sing. Nat did not want to sing. But the owner said that he
90 would fire the band if Nat did not sing. So Nat sang a song. Everyone
105 liked how he sang. They liked his deep voice.

114 Nat became famous. His first hit song was based on one of his
127 father's sermons. It was "Straighten Up and Fly Right." Nat was the first
140 black man to have his own radio show. He was also the first black man to
156 have his own TV show.

161 People loved Nat's music. He sold many records. Nat became very
172 rich. He bought a fancy home in Los Angeles. Nat did not live to be very
188 old. He was a heavy smoker. This was bad for his health. He died of lung
204 cancer in 1965.

207 But, Nat's music lives on today. His daughter Natalie is also a
219 singer. She made a recording. In it, she blended her voice with Nat's.
232 New tapes of the Nat King Cole Trio were released. People still enjoy
245 listening to Nat's music.

249

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

The Secret of Silk

0 Silk is strong, beautiful cloth. Silk was first made in China. No one
13 else knew how to make silk. China guarded the secret. For thousands
25 of years people had to buy silk from China. China would not let people
39 come see how silk was made. China traded silk for gold, glass, and goods
53 from the West.

56 It takes lot of work to make silk. Silkworms are fed mulberry
68 leaves. After five weeks, each worm makes a cocoon. Workers gather
79 the cocoons. They boil water in big pots. The cocoons are put in the hot
94 water. This kills the worms. The hot water softens the cocoons. Workers
106 carefully unwind silk threads. The thread is very long. Each thread is very
119 thin. It can break easily. Thread from many cocoons is twisted together.
131 This makes one strong silk thread. This thread can be twisted with other
144 threads to make it stronger. The thread is washed. Silk is white. Most
157 silk is dyed. There are many different colors of silk thread. The thread is
171 made into cloth.

174 The silk is used to make many things. Most silk is used to make
188 clothes. Sometimes silk thread is used to make rugs. The rugs are made
201 of knotted silk threads. People like silk because it is beautiful and it lasts
215 a long time.

218

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Native American Homes

0 The first people to live in North America were Native Americans.
11 They lived in groups. Each group was a nation. They lived in many parts
25 of the land. Native Americans built homes based on where they lived.

37 The Inuit lived in cold places. They lived in the northern part of
50 North America. The Inuit built igloos. They used blocks of ice. The ice
63 was glued together with snow. Igloos were warm inside.

72 The Cherokee lived in the southeast part of the U.S. Their homes
84 were shaped like a circle. They were made from poles, trees, and mud.
97 The homes had thatch roofs. The Cherokee homes were cool in summer.
109 They were warm in winter.

114 The Sioux lived on the plains of the U.S. They lived in tents called
128 tipis. Tipis were made with poles. The poles were covered with animal
140 skins. Tipis could be put up or taken down quickly. When the Sioux
153 moved from place to place, they took their tipis with them.

164

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Level 2 Practice Passages

- 201 The Panama Canal: A Sea Path
- 202 Mars: The Red Planet
- 203 Maps: How to Read Them
- 204 Baseball: A National Sport
- 205 Henry Ford: Automobile Manufacturer
- 206 The Model T: The Car That Changed America!
- 207 Rosa Parks: Mother of the Civil Rights Movement
- 208 Garter Snakes
- 209 The Ancient Kingdom of Kush
- 210 Thomas Edison: An American Inventor
- 211 Boys and Girls Clubs: Great Places to Hang Out
- 212 The Food Chain: A Cycle of Life
- 213 Rivers and Canals: Our Water Highways
- 214 Marco Polo: A World Traveler
- 215 The Great Wall: One of the World's Seven Wonders
- 216 Jim Thorpe: Athlete of the Century
- 217 The Louisiana Purchase: A Good Deal
- 218 Ben Franklin: Inventor and Statesman
- 219 Weather: It's What's Outside That Counts
- 220 Guide Dogs: Helpful Pets
- 221 Sharks: Amazing Fish
- 222 Roads and Highways
- 223 The Mexican Flag: Green, White, and Red
- 224 Harriet Tubman: Conductor of Freedom
- 225 Chinese Kite Flying: A National Pastime

The Panama Canal: A Sea Path

0 North and South America are joined by a little piece of land. Before
13 1900, it was hard to get from the East to the West Coast. Ships had to
29 sail around Cape Horn. It took three months to go from New York to San
44 Diego. People wanted a shorter trip.

50 The French started to dig a canal. It was hard work. Many workers
63 died of yellow fever. The French gave up. Doctors found a cure for yellow
77 fever. The U.S. made a deal to use the land in Panama. Men started to dig
93 the canal.

95 It took nine years to make the canal. It is 51 miles long. It goes
110 through two lakes. Workers cut a nine-mile path in the rock. The canal is
125 300 feet wide. The average depth is 120 feet. The canal was ready for use
140 in 1914. It took a third of the time to sail from the West to the East.

157 Parts of the canal are above sea level. At one place, it is 85 feet
172 above the sea. How can this be? The canal uses locks to move ships. A
187 lock is a water-filled space. The space is like a big room. There is no roof.
204 The room is made of cement. There is a door on each end of the lock.
220 One door of the lock opens. The water level is raised. A ship moves into
235 a lock. The other door opens. The ship moves out of the lock. The ship
250 sails into another lock. The water level is raised again. The ship is 85 feet
265 above sea level. The ship sails into the canal. The ship sails into another
279 lock. Water is let out of the lock. The ship is now lower. The canal has
295 three sets of locks.

299 Today many ships use the canal. The canal is very busy. Ships carry
312 many goods from one coast to the other. People take cruise ships through
325 the canal.

327

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Practice Passages **97**

Mars: The Red Planet

0 Mars is one of the nine planets. It is the fourth planet from the sun.
 15 Mars is the seventh largest planet. The planet Mars has a reddish color.
 28 So people call it the Red Planet. It was named because of its color. The
 43 month of March was named after the planet Mars. Mars was the name of
 57 the god of war. The ancient Greeks worshiped Mars. He was also called
 70 Ares.

71 Mars is the closest planet to Earth. When Mars is in the night sky,
 85 it can be very bright. Then people can see Mars. They do not even need a
 101 telescope.

102 Many spaceships have visited Mars. The first one to visit was in
 114 1965. The last one was in 1997. The spaceships bring back clues about
 127 Mars. People study the clues. They learn about Mars this way.

138 Mars is a small planet. It is also rocky. Mars is a very cold planet.
 153 There is no water on Mars now. But there may have been water at one
 168 time. There are clues that lakes or oceans may have been on Mars. People
 182 think that there was water a very long time ago. They also think that the
 197 water was there for a short time. Some people think that there was life
 211 on Mars at one time. No one knows for sure. They must keep studying to
 226 find out.

228

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Maps: How to Read Them

0 A map is an important tool. It is not hard to learn to read a map.
 16 There are four main directions on a map. They are north, east, south,
 29 and west. The sun rises in the east. It sets in the west. It is easy to find
 47 north and south. Point your right hand to the east. Point your left hand
 61 to the west. You will be looking at the north. South will be at the back
 77 of your head. On a map, the top is always north. The bottom is always
 92 south. The right side is east and the left is west. To help people remember
 107 the directions, there is usually a compass on the map with “N,” “E,”
 120 “S,” and “W” at each of the four points. Each letter stands for one of the
 136 directions.

137 On a world map, the land is usually brown, yellow, and green. The
 150 brown areas stand for mountains. The yellow areas show the deserts.
 161 Green is used to show low areas where many plants grow. The water
 174 areas are blue. Across the middle is a line. This is the equator. This is
 189 not a real line. It is put on the world map to show the middle of the
 206 earth, where it is hot. In the north and south it is very cold. These areas
 222 are usually white. Sometimes there are red dots on a world map. These
 235 usually represent large cities. If there is a very big red dot, the city is very
 251 big. If there is a smaller red dot, the city is smaller.

263 If you know a few simple facts, maps are easy to read. Maps are
 277 very useful. People use them to find places and to get information.

289

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Practice Passages **99**

Baseball: A National Sport

0 Many people like to play baseball. The game started in 1839 in New
 13 York. A teacher, Mr. Doubleday, laid out the field. He made up the rules.
 27 At first, players did not wear gloves. They caught the ball with their bare
 41 hands. This hurt their hands. In 1875, players started to wear gloves. In
 54 the beginning, catchers did not wear masks. Balls would hit them in the
 67 face. One catcher made a wire mask. Soon all of the catchers had masks.
 81 Now all players wear gloves. Catchers wear masks. They also wear knee
 93 and chest pads.

96 Most towns had teams. Many boys and men joined the teams. Some
 108 teams were very good. People liked to watch teams play the game. They
 121 wanted their team to win. Some teams started to pay players. People
 133 started to pay money to watch the game. This was in 1868. Soon there
 147 were two major baseball leagues. The first World Series was in 1903.

159 Now baseball is played everywhere. Little boys and girls play on
 170 town teams. Baseball is played in schools. Adults play the game for fun.
 183 People still like to watch baseball. They pay to watch the pros play. There
 197 are still two major leagues. Most big cities have a major league team.
 210 Baseball is a national sport.

215

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Henry Ford: Automobile Manufacturer

0 Many people think Henry Ford made the first auto. He did not.

12 There were autos since the 1890s. Each auto was made by hand. Only
25 rich people could own one. Mr. Ford had a dream. He wanted to make
39 a car for all the people. Mr. Ford wanted every family to own a car. He
55 wanted to make cars cheaply. Then a family could afford a car.

67 Mr. Ford made the Model T. It sold for \$850. By 1916, he sold the
82 same car for \$360. How did he do this? Mr. Ford used mass production.
96 He made many cars. They were all the same. Many workers put the
109 cars together. Each worker did one thing. One worker put on a top. Two
123 workers put on doors. Another put in a seat. The same model was made
137 each year. Year after year, it was the same car. The same car was made
152 for ten years. Everyone knew how to do the job well. There was a joke of
168 the day: You could have a Model T in any color you wanted as long as it
185 was black.

187 The profit on each car was small. Every family wanted a car. Mr.
200 Ford sold lots of cars. He became very rich. Henry Ford's dream came
213 true. Today many families can have a car. Some families have more than
226 one car.

228

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

The Model T: The Car That Changed America!

0 For thousands of years, it was hard for people to travel. Then came
 13 the Model T car. The Model T was cheap. Nearly every family could own
 27 the car. A new car cost \$360. A used car could be \$25 to \$50. Cars freed
 44 people. Cars let them travel more than ever before. They could live out
 57 of town. Men and women could drive to work. Families visited places far
 70 from home.

72 Cars had good and bad effects. Family trips were fun. People liked
 84 to go sight-seeing. Often lots of people were in one car. Some people were
 99 “back-seat drivers.” Some were good drivers. Some were road hogs. A few
 112 were bad drivers. By 1930 cars caused more than half of the accidental
 125 deaths in the U.S.

129 Cars were good for business. Many people made cars. This was
 140 good work. Steel was needed to make cars. More rubber was needed for
 153 tires. Cars needed oil and gas to run. Gas stations opened all over the U.S.
 168 Some people were needed to fix cars. Motels opened for people with cars.
 181 Places for tourists to visit opened. More roads were built. Trucks carried
 193 goods from place to place. It was easy for people to travel. Cars changed
 207 the way of life.

211

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Rosa Parks: Mother of the Civil Rights Movement

0 In 1955, some laws in the U.S. were not fair. All people were not
 14 treated the same way. Black people did not have the same rights as
 27 white people. In Alabama, they could not eat in the same places as white
 41 people. They could not drink from the same water fountain. Black and
 53 white children could not go to the same schools. White people could ride
 66 in the front of the city bus. Black people had to ride in the back of the
 83 bus. When black people got on the bus, they paid the driver. Then, they
 97 had to get off the bus and go to the back door to get on. Sometimes, the
 114 bus driver would leave a bus stop before black people got on. When the
 128 bus was crowded, black people had to give up their seats to white people.

142 Rosa Parks was a black woman. She sewed for a living. Rosa rode
 155 a city bus home from work every day. One day, Rosa sat down in a bus
 171 seat. A white man got on the bus. He told Rosa to move. He wanted to
 187 sit in her seat. Rosa was tired. She was tired from working long hours.
 201 She was also tired of being treated unfairly. She told the man, "No." The
 215 white man got mad. He called the bus driver. The bus driver told Rosa
 229 to move. She would not leave her seat. The bus driver called the police.
 243 They arrested Rosa. She was convicted. She had to pay a fine to get out
 258 of jail.

260 People became angry at the way Rosa was treated. They decided not
 272 to ride the city buses. This was called a *bus boycott*. It lasted 381 days.
 287 Rosa's case went to the U.S. Supreme Court. The court agreed with Rosa.
 300 The law was changed.

304 Rosa Parks was a hero to people of all races. Her peaceful protest
 317 became a model for the civil rights movement in the U.S. When she died,
 331 thousands of people of all races honored her. Rosa had made the world a
 345 better place to live.

349

Total Words Read _____

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Garter Snakes

0 Garter snakes make great pets. They live in many places. Garter
 11 snakes live in gardens. They live near houses. They are often the first
 24 snake a child sees. Children like to catch garter snakes. It is lucky that
 38 garters are safe snakes. If someone comes near them, garters will hide. If
 51 someone tries to fight, the garter will fight back. But garters never start
 64 a fight. They will never attack people or pets first. Garter snakes live
 77 between three and ten years.

82 Some people call garter snakes “garden snakes.” Other people call
 92 them grass snakes. Garter snakes are usually striped. Some garter snakes
 103 have red or yellow stripes. Their background color is plain or checked.
 115 Garter snakes are not very big. Full-grown garter snakes are two to three
 129 feet in length. They are also very narrow in width. Because they are
 142 small, garters are quick to heat up. They are also quick to cool down.
 156 Garter snakes sleep in the ground during the winter. They come out of the
 170 ground in the spring. Garter snakes like to bask in the sun during the day.

185 Garter snakes eat insects. They also eat worms and frogs. Since they
 197 are small, they are agile. This makes it easier for them to catch their prey.
 212 Garters use their sight mostly to hunt their prey, although they can also
 225 “hear” vibrations in the ground. Garters hunt during the cooler part of
 237 the day.
 239

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The Ancient Kingdom of Kush

0 Kush was once part of Egypt. It was on the southern part of the Nile
15 River. Egypt became weak. The army was not strong. Priests and nobles
27 fought with the kings. Kush rulers broke away from Egypt. This was in
40 671 B.C. Kush built a capital in Meroe.

48 Meroe was a good place for a city. It had iron ore and lots of wood.
64 Workers knew how to make pure metal from ore. Brick ovens were used
77 to heat the iron ore. Bellows were used to make wood fires very hot. Pure
92 iron was used to make tools and weapons. Iron spears and swords were
105 very strong. They were stronger than bronze weapons. There were also
116 many artists in Meroe. They made beautiful bowls, vases, and jewelry.
127 Meroe became a trade center. Traders came from all around. They wanted
139 iron and artworks. They traded fine cloth, glass, skins, gold, silver, and
151 ivory. Meroe was a great city.

157 In A.D. 350, a nearby army came to Meroe. They made war. The
170 people did not fight back. Some people were killed. Many became slaves.
182 A few ran away. The army took food and iron. The army set fire to reed
198 houses and brick buildings. The whole city burned down. No one came
210 back to the city. That was the end of Kush.

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Thomas Edison: An American Inventor

0 Thomas A. Edison is a well-known inventor in the U.S. His most
 13 famous invention was the electric light bulb. He put thin wire inside an
 26 airless glass globe. It was not like the lights used today. It did not have
 41 a steady light. The light bulb flickered. But it worked for forty hours.
 54 Soon the light bulb worked longer. People started to use light bulbs in
 67 the house. They did not need to use lamp oil or candles. The bulbs were
 82 safer. They did not need to use fire for light.

92 Edison had many good ideas. People liked the “talking machine.”
 102 This was the first record player. The first “record” was made from a thin
 116 piece of tin. The tin covered a tube. The tube slipped over a pipe-like
 131 part. Records were hollow tubes. The tubes were covered with wax. It
 143 was years before records were flat and round.

151 He had other good ideas. At first, films did not have sound. The
 164 words were printed at the bottom of the film. People read the words and
 178 watched the actors at the same time. Edison made records to go with the
 192 films. People could hear what the actors had to say. Today people use
 205 things that Thomas A. Edison invented.

211

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Boys and Girls Clubs: Great Places to Hang Out

0 The Boys and Girls Clubs started in 1860. At first, they were just
13 Boys Clubs. In Hartford, there were boys who roamed the streets. The
25 Boys Clubs were started to give these boys a safe place to go.

38 Many years later, in 1990, the name was changed. The Boys Club
50 became the Boys and Girls Club. Today, many kids are home alone after
63 school. They do not have adults to care for them. The Boys and Girls
77 Clubs can help these kids.

82 There are Boys and Girls Clubs in many U.S. cities. There are clubs
95 on Native American reservations, too. There are more than 3,000 clubs in
107 the U.S. More than 3 million boys and girls go to these clubs.

120 The clubs are open before school. They are also open after school.
132 The club staff helps kids with homework. The clubs also offer fun
144 things to do. There are games to play. The clubs have sports. Many have
158 computers. Boys and Girls Clubs have classes, too. The classes teach kids
170 skills they need to know to succeed in life. Boys and Girls Clubs are great
185 places to learn and grow.

190

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The Food Chain: A Cycle of Life

0 The food chain is a cycle. Plants need sunlight, air, and water to
 13 grow. Plants grow almost everywhere on earth. Animals eat living things.
 24 Some eat plants. Some eat other animals. Many eat both plants and
 36 animals. Animals, in turn, are food for even bigger animals. When big
 48 animals die, smaller animals eat them. Some of the animal parts rot on
 61 the ground. This makes nutrients for the ground. This helps the plants to
 74 grow.

75 The food chain is very simple. Here is an example. A bear gets old
 89 and dies. The body lies on the ground. The little bugs and flies find the
 104 body. They eat the bear. One of the flies is caught in a spider web. The
 120 spider eats the fly. Along comes a bigger insect. It eats the spider. The
 134 insect rests on the lake water. A little fish snaps at the insect. The little
 149 fish eats the insect. A bigger fish eats the little fish. A bear comes to the
 165 lake and catches the big fish. The bear eats the big fish. The cycle starts
 180 all over again. The food chain happens every day in many different ways.
 193 Every part of the food chain is important.
 201

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Rivers and Canals: Our Water Highways

0 In the 1700s, going from one place to another was hard. The roads
13 were not good. The roads were more like trails. People had to walk, ride
27 horses, or use horses to pull wagons. Towns were far apart. It took a long
42 time to go from place to place. It was easier to use rivers to move people
58 and goods. Rivers became very busy. Rafts moved up and down the
70 rivers. Flour, grains, cotton, wheat, corn, and meat moved on the rafts.
82 Many people used rivers to move west. They wanted farms close to the
95 rivers. There were many towns along the rivers.

103 The rivers and lakes were not connected. So people dug canals. The
115 longest canal was the Erie Canal. It was 363 miles long. It ran from the
130 Hudson River to Lake Erie. They started to dig the canal in 1819. It took
145 six years to dig the canal. Goods were placed on rafts. Mules pulled the
159 rafts. The mules walked along paths on the banks of the canals. A mule
173 could pull a load 50 times heavier than it could on any road. Now goods
188 and people could move easily.

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Marco Polo: A World Traveler

0 Marco Polo was born in 1254. He lived in Venice. He was one of the
15 first people to travel to China. He was seventeen when he left on his trip.
30 He went with his father. It took three years to get to China. They used
45 camels. There were many stops along the way. They crossed mountains,
56 rivers, and deserts.

59 In China, Polo saw many new things. Colorful silk cloth was used
71 to make clothes. Food had many spices. The people ate rice and drank
84 tea. Life was well-ordered. The cities were large. Paper money was used.
97 Moveable print blocks were used to print on paper. Good records were
109 kept. They had fireworks. Kites flew in the sky. A compass was used
122 in travel. The Polos were away from home for twenty-four years. They
135 brought back gold, silver, diamonds, and rubies.

142 Marco Polo wrote a book. The book was about the many things he
155 saw and did in China. He told about life in China. At first people did not
171 believe him. Some people went to China. They found that Marco Polo
183 was right. Trade between China and Europe grew. It took a long time to
197 travel to China. Soon people wanted a faster way to travel. Men began to
211 sail to China.

214

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The Great Wall: One of the World's Seven Wonders

0 The Great Wall of China is one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

14 The Great Wall is very big. It is in north China. The wall goes from east
30 to west. It goes over mountains, across grasslands, and through deserts.

41 The Great Wall is more than 3,000 miles long. It is about 40 feet tall and
57 15 feet wide. The top of the wall is more like a big road for horses and
74 people to walk on. Because the Great Wall is so big and long, it can be
90 seen from outer space

94 It took more than 2,000 years to build the Great Wall. It was built to
109 keep the enemies out of China. Along the wall are watchtowers. A long
122 time ago, soldiers and horses lived on the wall. There are big gates in the
137 wall. In times of peace, people could come and go from China.

149 There are hundreds of steps to the top of the wall. Today people can
163 climb to the top of the Great Wall. Many people come to visit the Great
178 Wall every year. They climb to the top of the wall. Some of them buy a
194 T-shirt that says, "I climbed to the top of the Great Wall." They are proud
209 that they were able to climb to the top of the wall.

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Jim Thorpe: Athlete of the Century

0 Jim was born in 1888. He was a Native American. Jim was always
 13 a great athlete. He rode horses at 3 years of age. By 5, he was a swimmer.
 30 In high school, he played football. Later, Jim went to college. He played
 43 semi-pro baseball. He was paid \$60 a month.

52 In 1912, Jim went to the Olympics. The games were held in Sweden.
 65 Jim won many gold medals. He won the pentathlon. It has five different
 78 sports. Jim was first in four of them. Then he won the decathlon. It
 92 has ten events. Jim was first in four of those. Jim came in second in
 107 two more. He was third in the rest. He set a world's record. The king of
 123 Sweden called him the best athlete in the world.

132 Olympic athletes are not supposed to be paid for playing sports.
 143 Some people found out that Jim had been paid a little money to play
 157 baseball. So, his gold medals were taken away. This made people angry.
 169 Jim went on to play pro baseball. He also played pro football. He was a
 184 star in both sports. People loved Jim. They even named a town after him.

198 Jim died in 1953. Thirty years later, his gold medals were given
 210 back to his children.

214

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The Louisiana Purchase: A Good Deal

0 The Mississippi River valley is very large. In 1800, it belonged to
12 France. All of the rivers that feed into the Mississippi are part of the
26 valley. The people of the U.S. lived on the east side of the river. They
41 farmed the land. Rivers were used to move farm goods. They floated
53 wheat, lumber, tobacco, and cotton on log rafts. New Orleans is at the
66 end of the river. Farm goods were sold in New Orleans. The goods were
80 sent to the U.S. and other ports. New Orleans belonged to France. New
93 Orleans was a big city. People wanted New Orleans to be part of the U.S.

108 In 1802, France was in a long war. France was at war with England.
122 France wanted money for the army. The U.S. was going to give ten
135 million dollars for New Orleans. France offered to sell the whole valley.
147 Not just New Orleans. The U.S. took a chance. They offered five million.
160 France said, "No." The U.S. knew the river valley was very big. In the
174 west, it goes all of the way to the Rocky Mountains. In the north, it
189 goes almost to Canada. The U.S. made a final offer of 15 million. France
203 needed the money. They accepted the offer.

210 This was a good deal for the U.S. People could move west. There
223 was lots of land for the people to farm. The U.S. became much bigger.

237

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Ben Franklin: Inventor and Statesman

0 Ben Franklin was born in Boston in 1706. His father was a soap and
14 candle maker. He had sixteen brothers and sisters. At ten, he started to
27 work in his father's shop. He worked for his father for two years. Then
41 he went to work for an older brother. Ben worked for nine years in his
56 brother's print shop. At the age of 17, he left.

66 Ben went to Philadelphia. He opened his own print shop. He
77 printed a newspaper and books. He wrote Poor Richard's Almanac. This
88 book was filled with advice. It had odd bits of wisdom. "Early to bed and
103 early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise." "God helps them
116 that help themselves." "One today is worth two tomorrows." "When the
127 well is dry, they know the worth of water." He printed a new book every
142 year. Many people bought his books. He became very rich.

152 Ben was an inventor. His cast-iron stove heated a room. Most of the
166 heat did not go up the chimney. Bifocal eyeglasses let people see near and
180 far. They did not need two pairs of glasses. He proved that lightning was
194 electricity. To do this he flew a kite in a storm. He made a lightning rod.
210 People put lightning rods on their houses. Lightning would strike the rod.
222 It would travel to the ground. The house would not burn. Ben became
235 famous.

236 Ben was a public servant. He helped to set up the first fire
249 department. He worked on the first library. He was the town postmaster.
261 He wanted to unite all of the colonies. He signed the Declaration of
274 Independence. Ben Franklin cared about the U.S.

281

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Weather: It's What's Outside That Counts

0 How do we tell the weather? We look outside. The weather is the
13 air around us. Weather can take many forms. Rain, snow, and wind are
26 forms of weather. Hurricanes and tornadoes are also forms of weather.
37 Many elements work together to make weather. There are three important
48 elements. They are heat, air, and water.

55 Heat comes from the sun to the earth. Without heat, there would
67 be no life. Heat travels in the form of light and energy. When it arrives,
82 it enters the blanket of air that surrounds the earth. This blanket of air
96 is called the atmosphere. Atmosphere has weight. It presses down on all
108 parts of the earth. This pressure is called air pressure. The earth's air is
122 full of air pressure. Some parts have low pressure. Warm air is lighter
135 than cold air. When there is warm, light air, there is lower air pressure.
149 Other parts of the earth have high air pressure. When the air is colder, the
164 pressure is higher.

167 Wind is made when air moves between low and high pressure
178 areas. When there is a big difference in pressure, the wind moves fast.
191 Sometimes this causes very strong winds. Strong winds cause hurricanes
201 and tornadoes

203 Water is also important. Our air is made up of many gases. One
216 kind of gas is water vapor. Water turns into water vapor when it is warm.
231 On warm days, there is more water vapor in the air. On cold days, there
246 is less water vapor. The amount of water vapor determines how humid
258 the air will be. When air rises, water vapor can turn into droplets. These
272 droplets can make clouds. Then clouds can cause water to fall from the
285 sky.

286 Weather is important. It affects our lives. If the weather is nice, we
299 like to be outside. We wear light clothes. If the weather is bad, we try to
315 stay inside. We wear thick, warm clothes. We can't control the weather.
327 But we need to pay attention to it.
335

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Guide Dogs: Helpful Pets

0 Most people think of dogs as great pets. But some dogs are more
13 than pets. They are guide dogs. Guide dogs help people in many ways.
26 Seeing Eye dogs help people who are blind. These dogs act as eyes for
40 their owners. Seeing Eye dogs help their owners travel from place to
52 place. Seeing Eye dogs ride on buses with their owners. They lead people
65 across busy streets. The dogs go in stores and restaurants with their
77 owners.

78 Hearing dogs help people who are deaf. These dogs alert their
89 owners to important sounds. Hearing dogs can be trained to listen for the
102 telephone ring. They might listen for the doorbell or alarm clock. They
114 can also listen for a baby's cry. The Hearing dog will nudge its owner
128 when it hears an important sound.

134 Other dogs are helpers for people in wheelchairs. These dogs help
145 with physical tasks. They might pick up dropped objects. They are trained
157 to flip light switches. These dogs are able to open drawers and doors.

170 Guide dogs help their owners to live full lives. With a guide dog,
183 owners don't have to rely on other people to help them. They can be
197 independent. Guide dogs are more than pets. They are lifelines for their
209 owners.

210

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Sharks: Amazing Fish

0 Sharks have lived in the oceans for millions of years. Sharks
11 were on earth before there were whales. They were on earth before the
24 dinosaurs.

25 Sharks are amazing fish. They have many teeth. In fact, sharks are
37 covered with teeth. Unlike other fish, sharks do not have bones. Most
49 fish have skeletons made of bone. But a shark skeleton is made of gristle.
63 Bony fish have skin that is covered with smooth scales. Sharks have skin
76 that is covered with denticles. Denticles are small, sharp teeth. They can
88 cut and scratch. Sharks have many rows of teeth. If a shark tooth falls
102 out, another tooth moves forward to take its place. This happens very
114 quickly. During its lifetime, a shark may have a thousand sets of teeth.

127 Many people think there is just one kind of shark. In fact, there are
141 at least 350 kinds of sharks. The largest shark is the whale shark. It is
156 as big as two elephants. The smallest shark is the cigar shark. It can fit
171 in a person's hand. The great white shark is known as "the man eater."
185 People are afraid of the great white shark. It sometimes attacks people in
198 water. The great white shark mostly eats large fish. It also eats seals and
212 otters.

213 There is no type of shark that naturally preys on humans. Only in
226 the last 100 years have there been reports of shark attacks on people. This
240 is because more people are going in the water. A person is more likely to
255 be killed in a car accident than to be attacked by a shark.
268

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Roads and Highways

0 Until about 1850 there were no real roads in the U.S. Most towns
13 were near water. Roads were used to get things to docks. Rivers and
26 canals were used to carry things long distances. Most people traveled on
38 foot, on horses, or by horse-drawn wagons. Some people used trains and
51 boats. Roads were trails through the woods. The trails were narrow and
63 rutted. They were muddy when it rained. Snow piled up on the trails.
76 Trails were dusty in the summer. Sometimes the trails had logs across
88 them. The roads were not good.

94 In the 1900s, people began to own cars. People could not drive cars
107 on the trails. They wanted good roads. In 1909, there were over 190,000
120 miles of road with a hard surface. These roads were made of crushed
133 rock. They were not made of concrete. People wanted better roads.

144 By 1920, more people had cars. Cars saved time and work. People
156 did not want to wait for trains and boats. They wanted to go places that
171 trains and boats did not go to. People wanted to go lots of places in cars.
187 People wanted more roads.

191 When there were better roads, people started to use buses. Trucks
202 were a new way to carry things. By 1930, there were 640,000 miles of
216 roads with hard surfaces. People used roads more and more. Today there
228 are millions of miles of roads in the U.S.

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The Mexican Flag: Green, White, and Red

0 The Mexican flag is a banner with three bands of color. Its colors
13 are green, white, and red. The green band is on the left side of the flag. It
30 stands for the earth. The white band is in the middle of the flag. It stands
46 for purity. The red band is on the right side of the flag. It is a symbol
63 of blood. It stands for the blood shed during battles. These battles took
76 place during Mexico's War for Independence.

82 There is an eagle inside the white band in the center of the flag.
96 The eagle is eating a rattlesnake. Its left claw is perched on a cactus.
110 There are green oak branches on the left below the eagle. These stand for
124 strength. There are laurel branches on the right below the eagle. These
136 stand for victory. The eagle is from an Aztec legend. The Aztecs were told
150 by their god of the sun to look for their promised land. They would know
165 the place when they found an eagle eating a snake while standing on a
179 cactus. The Aztecs found such a place in 1325. They built their homes on
193 land that is now Mexico City.
199

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Harriet Tubman: Conductor of Freedom

0 Harriet was born in 1820. Her parents were slaves in Maryland.
 11 That meant Harriet was a slave, too. Slaves were owned by a “master.”
 24 Even though she was just a child, Harriet had to work. Her job was to
 39 take care of the master’s baby. She had to keep the baby from crying at
 54 night. If the baby cried, Harriet was whipped. Harriet hated being a slave.
 67 She wanted to be free.

72 When she grew up, Harriet married John Tubman. He was a free
 84 black man. But Harriet was still a slave. A few years later, Harriet became
 98 worried that she was going to be sold. She decided to run away. She
 112 escaped to the northern part of the U.S. There was no slavery in the
 126 North. Harriet ended up in Pennsylvania. She got a job there and saved
 139 her money.

141 Harriet wanted to help other slaves become free. It was dangerous
 152 to help slaves escape. But Harriet was very brave. She went back to
 165 Maryland 19 times to help the slaves there. She showed slaves how to
 178 follow the Underground Railroad. This “railroad” was a group of homes.
 189 They were called “safe houses.” They were owned by people who wanted
 201 to help the slaves. Slaves could stop to rest at the safe houses along the
 216 way as they moved north.

221 Harriet Tubman helped 300 slaves become free. Harriet is an
 231 American hero.

233

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Chinese Kite Flying: A National Pastime

0 Kites in China reflect culture. Kites have many shapes. Most of the
12 kites are made in the shape of animals. The kite shapes that most people
26 like are deer, tigers, birds, fish, and dragons. People in China think that
39 the animal shapes have meaning. Deer are good luck. The tiger, king
51 of the animals, is mighty and strong. Catfish are for more wealth in the
65 coming year. Dragons are wise and very important in China. Many kites
77 look like dragons. In China, there are many big and many small kites. Old
91 and young people fly kites.

96 In China people have flown kites for more than 2,400 years. The old
109 people teach the young people about kite culture. They show them how
121 to make the kites with paper and wood. Some little kites have one part.
135 Very big kites have many parts and shapes. The people paint the kites
148 with many colors. The kites are very pretty. Every day many people fly
161 kites in the sky.

165 People believe that kite flying is healthy. When someone is worn-
176 out and tired, or when they want to get out of the house, they go outside
192 and fly a kite. They watch their pretty kites go up in the sky. When
207 people fly kites, they can look at the sky, clouds, and trees. This makes
221 them feel good and happy. Many people in China like to fly kites.
234

Total Words Read _____

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Level 3 Practice Passages

- 301 White, Brown, and Black: The Bear Facts
- 302 Yangtze River
- 303 Is It a Solid, a Liquid, or a Gas?
- 304 Sponges: Simple Animals
- 305 Camels: One Hump or Two?
- 306 Seasons: Passages of Time
- 307 Whales: Huge Sea Mammals
- 308 Terra-Cotta Warriors
- 309 Bridges: An Important Beginning
- 310 Jesse Owens: Olympic Athlete
- 311 The Right to Read
- 312 A Mexican Fiesta
- 313 Helen Keller: Triumph Over Tragedy
- 314 The Birth of a River
- 315 Dolores Huerta: Labor Leader
- 316 Blackbeard: A Fierce Pirate
- 317 Beware of Bears
- 318 Sounds: Moving Waveforms
- 319 Bones, Bones, Bones
- 320 Caves: Underground Rooms
- 321 Glaciers: Rivers of Ice
- 322 The Giraffe: World's Tallest Animal
- 323 The Sioux: Buffalo Hunters
- 324 Cesar Chavez: Champion of Migrant Farm Workers
- 325 Scott Joplin: Father of Ragtime Music

White, Brown, and Black: The Bear Facts

0 There are three types of bears in North America. They are the polar
13 bear, the brown bear, and the black bear. Canada and Alaska are the only
27 places where all three types of bears live.

35 Polar bears are marine mammals. They live in very cold climates
46 where there is ice and snow. Polar bears have hair that looks white. They
60 are the largest kind of bear. When they stand on their hind legs, polar
74 bears are between 8 and 10 feet tall. Polar bears can weigh between 600
88 and 1,400 pounds. They are meat eaters. They have special claws which
100 help them to hold onto the ice and catch seals. The ringed seal is the
115 polar bear's favorite meal!

119 Brown bears have different colors and names. Some brown bears
129 are dark brown. Other brown bears are blonder. All brown bears have
141 a hump above their shoulders. This hump is made of fat and muscle.
154 Brown bears who live on the coast are called brownies. Those who live in
168 the interior are grizzlies. Grizzlies are smaller and meaner than brownies.
179 Brown bears are 6 to 8 feet tall when standing on their hind legs. They
194 can weigh between 400 and 1,500 pounds. Brown bears eat a lot of
207 different things like bugs, fish, berries, and baby animals. They spend all
219 summer eating to store up fat for a winter nap.

229 Black bears are the smallest kind of bear. They are only 5 or 6 feet
244 when standing on their hind legs. Some black bears are a jet black color.
258 Others are lighter. Most black bears have brown noses and big ears. Black
271 bears weigh between 100 and 400 pounds. They have claws that are sharp
284 and curved. These special claws help them to climb trees.

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Total Words Read _____

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Yangtze River

0 The Yangtze River is the longest river in China. It is the third
13 longest river in the world. It runs from the mountains in the West to
27 the flat land in the East by the China Sea. Over 700 rivers flow into the
43 Yangtze. The water in the river is brown. The river runs like a zigzag all
58 of the way from the mountains to the sea.

67 The Yangtze River is divided into three parts. In the upper part, the
80 river is small. There are many big rocks and waterfalls. The water moves
93 very fast. Boats cannot sail in the upper part.

102 In the middle part, the water flow is slower. Many boats sail on
115 the river. There are tall hills on both sides of the river. Sometimes only
129 one boat can sail at a time. There are lots of trees and flowers. It is very
146 pretty. There are many small towns and fishing villages built along the
158 river. In this part of the river, a dam is being built. It will be the world's
175 biggest dam. Then there will be no more floods.

184 In the lower part of the river, the river is wide. The water flow is
199 very slow. Many ships sail on the river. The land beside the river is flat.
214 There are many farms and big cities along the river.

224 The Yangtze River is a very important river in China. People have
236 lived and worked along the river for thousands of years.

246

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Is It a Solid, a Liquid, or a Gas?

0 Scientists tell us that all matter has three forms. All matter has some
13 weight or mass. All matter also takes up some space in our universe.
26 Atoms make up all matter. There are three forms of matter.

37 The first kind of matter is a solid. A solid has weight or mass, and it
53 takes up space. A solid is different from a liquid or a gas. A solid has its
70 own shape. Solids, such as wood, a glass, or a toy top, are one example
85 of matter. Solids are hard. They don't change their shapes. Some other
97 examples of solids are soft and bend easily. Shirts and modeling clay are
110 two examples of this kind of solid.

117 The second type of matter is a liquid. Water, milk, and honey are
130 examples of liquids. A liquid does not have a shape of its own. A liquid
145 takes the shape of whatever container it is in. If milk is in a tall glass,
161 then the milk is tall. If honey is on a spoon, then the honey takes the
177 shape of the spoon.

181 The third type of matter is a gas. A gas is like a liquid because it
197 takes the shape of its container. But a gas is different from a liquid in that
213 it fills the entire container. A gas may have color or a smell, but it may
229 not have either. We can't see the air, but we can feel it when the wind
245 blows. Matter is what makes up our universe, and it only takes three
258 forms. Those three forms make up everything in our world.
268

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Sponges: Simple Animals

0 Many people think of a sponge as a kitchen tool. Kitchen sponges
12 are one kind of sponge. These sponges are man-made. Other types of
25 sponges are alive. These types of sponges are animals. They actually look
37 more like plants than animals. However, a sponge is the simplest form of
50 a multicellular animal. Most sponges live in the oceans of the world. A
63 few sponges live in fresh water. Sponges do not live on land.

75 There are two basic types of sponges: encrusting and freestanding.
85 Encrusting sponges look like moss. They cover the surface of rocks.
96 Freestanding sponges have more inner volume. They can grow into
106 strange shapes. They can become very big. The barrel sponge is a
118 freestanding sponge. It grows in the tropics. A whole person could fit
130 inside some barrel sponges. Tube sponges also grow in the tropics. They
142 come in many beautiful colors.

147 A sponge does not have a head or a mouth. Nor does a sponge have
162 arms or feet. So a sponge cannot move. It stays in one place for its whole
178 life. If a sponge is touched, it does not react. It lives on the bottom of
194 the ocean. A sponge attaches to something solid. It finds a place where
207 there is enough food. A sponge does not make its own food like a plant
222 does. That is one reason that the sponge is an animal. Sponges capture
233 food. A sponge eats tiny plants and animals that live in the water around
249 it. Sponges have a thin outside layer. Inside this outer layer is an open
263 space. The open space is called a pore. Tiny hairs move constantly in the
277 water. The hairs send food and water through the pores. Special cells in
290 the pores eat the tiny bits of food and organisms. The rest of the water
305 and food goes out the top of the sponge. Sponges are covered with pores.
319 No wonder that their scientific name means, "pore-bearing."

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Camels: One Hump or Two?

0 Camels are funny looking mammals with humps on their backs.

10 Camels are large animals. They are seven or eight feet tall. They have
23 small heads but long, curved necks. Their legs are long, but their bodies
36 are heavy. Camels are used for riding or for carrying heavy loads.

48 There are two kinds of camels. Camels with one hump live in
60 Arabia, Asia, and North America. These camels have long legs and are
72 good for riding. One-hump camels can run 8 or 10 miles an hour. They
87 can travel 100 miles each day. Riding a camel is not like riding a horse.
102 First, a camel has to kneel down before the rider can get on its back.
117 These camels have hard pads on their knees and chest. The camel's feet
130 are wide, with two toes. This helps to keep them from sinking into the
144 sand. The camel moves its right legs together and then its left legs. Riding
158 on a camel is like rolling or swaying from side to side.

170 Two-hump camels live in Central Asia. They are used to cold
182 climates and rocky land. Camels with two humps have shorter legs with
194 hard soles on their feet. They are used as pack animals. These camels can
208 carry four- or five-hundred pounds on their backs. They can walk two or
222 three miles an hour.

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Seasons: Passages of Time

0 Our planet is always moving. Earth moves around the sun in a path.
 13 This path is called an orbit. Each year, the earth orbits the sun. There is
 28 an imaginary line that runs through the center of the earth. This line is
 42 called an axis. The two points where the axis passes through the earth
 55 are called poles. There is the North Pole and the South Pole. As the earth
 70 moves around the sun, it spins on its axis. This spinning causes day and
 84 night. The side of the earth that is pointed to the sun has daylight. The
 99 side of the earth that is pointed away from the sun has darkness. The
 113 days change as the earth orbits the sun. The length of the days changes.
 127 The temperature changes.

130 There are four seasons: fall, winter, spring, and summer. The
 140 seasons change because of the earth's axis and the earth's orbit. Each of
 153 the earth's poles is turned toward the sun for part of the year. Each pole
 168 is turned away from the sun for the other part of the year.

181 Fall begins in late September. The first day of fall is called the
 194 fall equinox. During the fall equinox, the sun is just above the equator.
 207 The day and the night are the same length. During the fall season,
 220 temperatures drop more quickly.

224 Winter begins in December. The first day of winter is called the
 236 winter solstice. It is the shortest day of the year. That means that there
 250 are less hours of daylight than on any other day of the year. After
 264 December 21, the days begin to get longer by a few minutes each day.

278 Spring begins around March 20. As in the fall season, there is an
 291 equinox in the spring. That is when the day and the night are the same
 306 length. After the spring equinox, the daylight hours get longer by a few
 319 minutes every day. The temperatures start to get warmer.

328 Summer is the warmest season. It begins around June 21. The first
 340 day of summer is called the summer solstice. It is the longest day of the
 355 year. That means that there are more daylight hours on this day than on
 369 any other day.

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Whales: Huge Sea Mammals

0 The whale is a sea mammal that breathes air but cannot live on
13 land. It is the largest known mammal. The whale is one of two kinds of
28 mammals that live in the water for their entire lives. Like all mammals,
41 whales are warm-blooded and nurse their young. There are many kinds
53 of whales. The largest whale is the blue whale. A blue whale can grow to
68 be about 94 feet long. That is the size of a 9-story building. The smallest
84 whale is a dwarf sperm whale. These whales only grow to be about eight-
98 feet long.

100 A whale looks like a very large fish. It has flukes in its tail, which
115 help it to swim through the water. Whales have flippers that are sort
128 of like the fingers and hands of mammals that live on land. The whale
142 is covered with smooth, glossy skin, which helps it to swim fast in the
156 water. Below the skin is a layer of fat called blubber that helps to keep
171 the whale warm. Because of this blubber, a whale does not need as much
185 hair or fur as a land mammal. In fact, adult whales have almost no hair.
200 Whales have large, broad heads, but very small eyes. Whales breathe
211 air through their lungs before diving underwater for fifteen or twenty
222 minutes at a time. While air is in the whale's lungs, it becomes warm and
237 moist. When this air is released through the whale's blowhole, it becomes
249 a kind of vapor. This is the called the spout. Each type of whale has its
265 own kind of spout. For example, the blue whale has a tall, thick spout
279 while the humpback whale's spout is low and round. Experienced whale
290 watchers can tell whales apart by their spouts.
298

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Terra-Cotta Warriors

0 The first emperor of China built a big tomb. When he died, he
13 wanted to be buried in his tomb. The tomb was very, very big. It was
28 made of wood. It covered more than five city blocks. The emperor had a
42 big army. He had more than 8,000 soldiers. He had more than 500 horses.
56 A clay model was made for each of his soldiers. Clay models were made
70 for the horses. The emperor put the clay soldiers and horses in the tomb.
84 He put bows, arrows, and spears in the tomb.

93 The emperor believed that the souls of the soldiers and horses
104 would go to the afterlife with him. The first emperor was not nice to his
119 people. He made them build his tomb and work on the Great Wall. The
133 people were not happy. When the emperor died, he was put in the tomb
147 with the clay soldiers and horses. Two years later, the poor farmers got
160 mad. They broke into the tomb. The farmers took the bows, arrows, and
173 spears. They knocked down the soldiers. The clay soldiers broke into
184 pieces. The poor farmers burned the tomb. Everyone forgot about the
195 tomb. Dirt covered the tomb. It became a little hill. People started to farm
209 on the hill.

212 Two thousand years later, in 1974, some farmers were digging a
223 well. They found some clay parts of the soldiers. They started to dig a pit.
238 In China, they are still digging in the pit to this day. They find parts of the
255 clay soldiers. Then they put each soldier back together. It will take many
268 years to dig up the soldier parts. It will take even longer to put all of the
285 soldiers together. There may even be more clay figures in the tomb of the
299 first emperor.

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Bridges: An Important Beginning

0 Bridges are important. People have many reasons to build bridges.
 10 Cave people built bridges with logs. They put logs across a stream. Then
 23 they walked to the other side. People who lived in jungles made bridges
 36 from vines. They twisted plant vines into ropes. They put two vine ropes
 49 next to each other. Then they tied the vines to trees. Bridges helped
 62 people to cross rivers. They could go to a better hunting ground. They
 75 could go to trade with other people.

82 People all over the world build bridges. Bridges are made in many
 94 ways. In China, bridges were made with houses on each end. Sometimes
 106 there were places to eat on the bridges. These kinds of bridges were nice
 120 for travelers. The Romans made beautiful stone bridges. Roman bridges
 130 had rounded openings. These openings are called arches. Arch bridges
 140 are still built today. In Persia, armies built bridges that floated. They used
 153 small boats with a floor on top. Armies used floating bridges when they
 166 wanted to cross water in a hurry. Floating bridges are called pontoon
 178 bridges.

179 Not all bridges go over water. Some bridges go over land. Some
 191 go over railroad tracks. Others go over buildings. Still others go over
 203 highways. Early bridges were made of wood. Now they are made of steel
 216 or concrete.

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Jesse Owens: Olympic Athlete

0 Jesse was born in Alabama in 1913. His father was a sharecropper.
 12 When he was 9, Jesse's family moved to Ohio. In high school, Jesse
 25 tried out for the track team. Jesse ran the 100-yard dash. He was very
 40 fast. Jesse ran it in just 9.4 seconds. His coach was amazed. Coach Riley
 54 helped Jesse become a high school track and broad jump star.

65 Jesse went on to college in Ohio. He broke world records for
 77 running and jumping. Jesse went to the Olympics in Germany in 1936.
 89 Hitler was then the leader of Germany. He thought white Germans were
 101 better than Jews. He also thought they were better than black people.
 113 Jesse was African American. He won four gold medals at the Olympics.
 125 This made Hitler mad. He did not congratulate Jesse.

134 Most other Germans liked Jesse. They admired his skills. One
 144 German athlete helped Jesse at the Olympics. His name was Lutz Long.
 156 Lutz gave Jesse advice. The advice helped Jesse to qualify for—and win—
 169 the gold medal for broad jump. Jesse never forgot Lutz's friendship.

180 During his life, Jesse set seven world records. When he retired, he
 192 gave speeches. He said that athletes should be honest. He told them to
 205 live healthy lives.

208 Jesse Owens was not just a great athlete. He was a very good
 221 person.

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The Right to Read

0 Reading is important. It is a useful skill. People who can read have
13 an easier time in life. They can read traffic signs, menus, and maps. They
27 can pass a test to get a driver's license. They can apply for a job. Reading
43 is also powerful. People who can read can learn about all kinds of things.

57 However, not everyone can read. Some experts study reading. They
67 say that one out of every six people in the world can't read. There are
82 many reasons for this problem. Some countries do not let girls go to
95 school. In those countries, many women cannot read. Other people live in
107 very poor countries. No one can afford to learn to read in these countries.
121 They are busy trying to find food to eat. Many countries are at war. Their
136 people are fighting to stay alive. They do not have time to learn to read.

151 In the U.S., there are many people who do not speak English. They
164 came from other countries. It is hard to come to a new country. It takes
179 time to learn the language well enough to read it. Other people have
192 learning problems. It is harder for them to learn to read.

203 The good news is that everyone can learn how to read. There
215 are special programs to teach people to read. One of the best ways to
229 become better at reading is to read every day. Countries want to show
242 their citizens how important it is to learn to read. Every September 8, we
256 celebrate International Literacy Day. Literacy is a word that means being
267 able to read, write, and speak.

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A Mexican Fiesta

0 A fiesta is a party. Mexican people celebrate with a fiesta. A fiesta
13 can be held to honor a person. It can also be held to honor an event.
29 Some fiestas are simple ones. They may last only one day. Fiestas can
42 also be elaborate. They can last for a week or more.

53 Fiestas are colorful. Green, white, and red are used for decorations.
64 These are the colors of the Mexican flag. Flowers are also used. Fiestas
77 have lots of music. Mariachi bands usually play. There is much singing
89 and dancing. One kind of dance is the Mexican Hat Dance.

100 Fiestas have a lot of food. There are many kinds of spicy dishes.
113 People feast all day long. Some fiestas have parades. People dress up in
126 costumes. There may be fireworks. Sometimes, there are rodeos. Other
136 times, there may be bullfights.

141 One thing is for certain: Fiestas are FUN!

149

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Helen Keller: Triumph Over Tragedy

0 Helen Keller was born on June 27, 1880. She was a healthy baby
13 at first. Then she got sick. She had a high fever. Helen almost died. The
28 fever went away after many days. But Helen was not the same. She was
42 now deaf and blind.

46 The next few years were very hard. Helen was angry. She cried
58 and threw things on the floor. She grabbed food off people's plates. Her
71 parents did not know what to do. They asked an expert for help. He was
86 Alexander Graham Bell. Bell had invented the telephone. But he also
97 worked with deaf children. Bell told Helen's parents to hire a special
109 teacher for Helen. Helen's parents wrote to a special school. It was the
122 Perkins School for the Blind. They asked for a special teacher to come
135 work with Helen.

138 On March 3, 1887, Annie Sullivan came to live at the Keller's home.
151 Annie told Helen's parents that Helen must learn to behave. She said that
164 it was not fair to let Helen act wild. The kind thing to do would be to
181 teach Helen. Annie showed Helen how to eat with a spoon and fork. Most
195 important of all, Annie taught Helen words by spelling them into her
207 hand. At first, Helen did not understand. Her teacher never gave up. One
220 day, Annie poured water over Helen's hand. Then she spelled the word
232 water into Helen's hand. Finally, Helen understood! She understood that
242 words had meaning. That day was the turning point for Helen. From then
255 on, she began to learn quickly. Helen learned to read using raised letters.
268 Later, she learned to read braille. Helen also learned to write. She used a
282 special typewriter. Annie Sullivan continued to help Helen. Helen Keller
292 went to college. The college was Radcliffe College in Boston. Helen was
304 the first deaf and blind person to earn a degree from Radcliffe. The story
318 of Helen Keller and her teacher, Annie Sullivan, is a famous one. Many
331 books, plays, and movies tell their story.
338

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The Birth of a River

0 Have you ever wondered how a river begins? A river gets its start
13 high in the mountains or in the hills. It begins as a very small stream.
28 The river may also get its start from a spring bubbling from beneath the
42 ground. The little stream begins to flow downward from its mountain
53 home. Other little streams join it. More and more water begins to flow
66 downward. Soon the little streams have joined to become a brook. The
78 brook continues to grow bigger. Then the brook becomes a river.

89 Some smaller rivers that join the big river are called its tributaries.
101 The ground that the river flows over is called the riverbed. The river's
114 banks are its left and right sides. As the river travels, it picks up small
129 stones, sticks, and soil. Where the river empties into a lake or a sea is its
145 mouth. The river drops what it is carrying at its mouth when it meets a
160 lake or the sea. All of the stones, sticks, and soil the river drops build up
176 to form land.

179 The land that is formed at the river's mouth is called its delta. The
193 river's delta has rich soil for farming. A river delta grows many crops.
206 It takes hundreds and hundreds of years to build up the river's delta.
219 Sometimes the river floods and takes soil from its delta. Other times it
232 just keeps on adding soil. This makes its delta even larger. All of the
246 small streams, brooks, and small rivers that empty into the big river form
259 the big river's basin. Some river basins are hundreds of miles wide.
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Dolores Huerta: Labor Leader

0 Dolores Huerta was born in 1930. She lived in a mining town in
13 New Mexico. Her parents divorced when she was three years old. Dolores
25 and her mother, Alicia, moved to California. They settled in the central
37 valley. There were many farms there. Farm workers picked crops. They
48 worked hard. Farm workers made little money. It was hard for them to
61 buy food and shoes.

65 Alicia owned a hotel. She was a generous woman. She let farm
77 workers and their families stay for free. Alicia taught her daughter to be
90 kind and caring.

93 Dolores went to college. She became a teacher. She felt sad for the
106 children of farm workers. Many of them came to school hungry. Some
118 needed shoes. Others had to work in the fields. Most of the children went
132 to many different schools.

136 Dolores left her job. She wanted to help the farm workers. Dolores
148 met a man named Cesar Chavez. He also worked hard to help farm
161 workers. Together, Dolores and Cesar started a union. It was the United
173 Farm Workers of America. Farm workers joined the union.

182 Sometimes, the union held a strike. That means that the farm
193 workers stopped working. They did not pick any more crops until their
205 changes were made. The FWA asked for the workers to be paid more
218 money. The grape farmers would not pay better wages. In 1965, the
230 workers went on strike. About 5,000 workers left their jobs. The strike
242 lasted five years. When it was over, the workers won. They would make
255 more money for their hard work.

261 Dolores did not quit when the strike was over. She spoke against
273 using pesticides on crops. The pesticides made the workers sick. She
284 kept fighting for farm worker rights. Dolores helped them become U.S.
295 citizens. She made sure that their children went to good schools. Dolores
307 has won many awards for helping farm workers to have better lives.
319

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Blackbeard: A Fierce Pirate

0 Blackbeard was one of the most hated pirates of all time. He
 12 became a pirate around 1713. He is thought to have come from England.
 25 His real name was Edward Teach. He had a long, black beard that
 38 covered most of his face. He braided his long, black beard and tied the
 52 braids with hemp. He also put hemp in his hair. Then he would light the
 67 hemp during battles. Blackbeard looked like his face was circled with
 78 fire. Many people were afraid of Blackbeard. When they saw him coming,
 90 they would give him what he wanted. Then Blackbeard would let them
 102 sail away. If people tried to fight Blackbeard, he would kill them. Even
 115 Blackbeard's own men were afraid of him.

122 Blackbeard spent a lot of time off the coast of Virginia and the
 135 Carolinas in 1717 and 1718. His ship was called Queen Anne's Revenge.
 147 Blackbeard stole ships and held people for ransom. One day his ship
 159 ran aground near Cape Fear. The governor of North Carolina pardoned
 170 Blackbeard. But Blackbeard would not stop his pirate ways. Blackbeard
 180 had captured more than 40 ships as a pirate. He had caused the death of
 195 hundreds of people. Finally, the governor sent a ship to arrest Blackbeard.
 207 There was a huge, bloody battle. Blackbeard put up a big fight but was
 221 killed. He died with 5 bullets and more than 20 stab wounds in his body.
 236

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Beware of Bears

0 Bears! Many people are fascinated by them. After all, who can resist
12 a stuffed, cuddly teddy bear? Bear enclosures at zoos are often a popular
25 exhibit. Watching adorable bear cubs romp brings smiles and chuckles
35 from onlookers.

37 Bears in the wild are a different story. Bears are powerful animals
49 and can kill humans. If you are a camper or a hiker, it is important to
65 beware of bears. Bear country can be a dangerous place. Knowing some
77 bear essentials can help to keep you safe.

85 First of all, never, ever try to feed a bear. Bears love garbage and
99 are easily turned into junk-food addicts. They will then be attracted to
112 areas when people gather, such as a camping ground. National parks and
124 forests often have special “bear-proof” trash cans. Campers are told to
136 keep their food locked up and put up in a tree. Bears will destroy cars and
152 cabins in an attempt to get to a food source.

162 When in bear country, make noise to let the bears know that you
175 are around. Bears like to be alone. They do not like to be surprised by
190 people. Bears will usually stay away if they hear you coming.

201 Be alert when you are in bear country. Stay away from dense brush.
214 Use a flashlight at night. Be on the lookout for bear droppings. Do not
228 set up camp if you see signs of a bear. Be especially careful if you see
244 bear cubs. You can be sure that the mother bear is near. She might attack
259 to protect her cubs. If you happen to come across a bear, do not run!
274 Instead, back away very slowly. Use bear (pepper) spray only as a last
287 resort.

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Sounds: Moving Waveforms

0 Sounds are a part of everyday life. Car horns beep. Dogs bark.
 12 Children shout. Noisy jets roar across the sky. People whisper to one
 24 another. There are hundreds of sounds made every day. It is easy for
 37 people to tell them apart. But there are other sounds that cannot be heard
 51 by people. These sounds are too high-pitched for the human ear. They are
 65 called ultrasounds.

67 Sounds are produced by a certain type of motion. These motions
 78 are called vibrations. Sound travels from a vibrating object to a human
 90 ear. It does this by using a sound carrier. The sound carrier may be a
 105 solid, liquid, or a gas. One way sound travels is through air. Sound waves
 119 make the particles in the air move. One moving particle touches another
 131 particle and makes that new particle move. Then that particle touches
 142 the next particle and so on. If there is no sound carrier, no sound can be
 158 heard.

159 The speed of sound depends upon how it is traveling. Sound travels
 171 a little faster in warmer air than it does in colder air. However, sound
 185 travels much faster in water than it does in air. It travels even faster in
 200 solids such as steel or aluminum. The denser the sound carrier, the faster
 213 the sound travels. The speed of sound is slower than the speed of light
 227 though. That is why we hear thunder after we see lightning.
 238

Total Words Read _____

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Bones, Bones, Bones

0 Bones are alive! They are made of living tissue. Calcium and
11 phosphorous and bone cells make up bones. All of the bones in a body
25 make up the skeleton. An infant has over a hundred and forty more
38 bones than an adult. The baby has around three hundred and fifty
50 bones in its body. An adult has only two hundred and six bones. What
64 happened to over one hundred and forty bones? As a baby begins to grow
78 and develop, some of those bones grow together. This is called fusion.

90 Bones are very important. They give bodies their shape. Muscles
100 are attached to bones. The muscles allow the bones to give the body
113 movement. People are able to run and jump because of their bones and
126 muscles. Bones are also hard and strong. They protect the soft organs of
139 the body. The heart, lungs, and brain are soft organs. Bones provide a
152 protective cage around these important organs.

158 It is important to keep bones strong. One way to do this is to eat
173 green vegetables and drink milk. Green vegetables and milk have calcium
184 and phosphorous. These help keep bones strong. Strong bones help
194 bodies to stay healthy.

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Caves: Underground Rooms

0 A cave is a hollow room found in the earth. There are many kinds
14 of caves. Caves are important to scientists who study early humanity.
25 Scientists can often find the signs of early life in caves. Cave people lived
39 in caves more than one hundred thousand years ago. The cave people
51 left paintings on cave walls. These paintings showed the types of animals
63 they hunted. Fossils of early plant and animal life have been discovered
75 in caves.

77 One type of cave is formed when water wears away soft rock under
90 the ground. Mammoth Cave in Kentucky is a famous United States cave.
102 Mammoth Cave is more than 200 miles long. Some of its rooms are over
116 fifty feet high. There are so many streams in Mammoth Cave that visitors
129 can travel in boats. Since the cave is dark, the fish that live there do not
145 have eyes. They do not need to see.

153 Another kind of cave is called a sea cave. This type of cave is
167 formed by ocean waves pounding against cliffs. A famous sea cave, called
179 Fingal's Cave, can be found in Scotland. Ice caves form when glaciers
191 melt and then freeze again. Austria is the home of a famous ice cave. An
206 ice cave called the Singing Cave can be found in Iceland. Another type of
220 cave is a lava cave. The lava of a volcano forms a lava cave.

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Glaciers: Rivers of Ice

0 A river has a lot of water in it. Some rivers are long and wide.
 15 Other rivers are short and narrow. One kind of river carries boats and
 28 people and supplies to towns and cities along its banks. Another kind of
 41 river has a lot of water in it. This river does not carry boats or people or
 58 supplies. It does move, but it moves very, very slowly. This river is made
 72 of ice, and it has a special name. This river of ice is called a glacier.

88 When snow falls in most places, it melts when the weather turns
 100 warm. But there are some places that never get warm. The snow does
 113 not melt. Year after year, the snow and ice sit on the tops of high, cold
 129 mountains. After a time, the snow and ice become heavy and begin to
 142 slip down the mountains. This glacier or river of ice may only move from
 156 one to three feet per year. As the river of ice moves slowly down the
 171 mountains, its bottom edge may begin to melt off. This melting is caused
 184 because the bottom edge of the glacier reached lower, warmer valleys.
 195 The glacier changes the soil it flows over as it moves slowly down the
 209 mountains. Glaciers scrape the earth and move huge rocks and boulders
 220 in their paths. They also move and push trees and anything else in their
 234 paths.

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Total Words Read _____

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The Giraffe: World's Tallest Animal

0 The tallest animal in the world is the giraffe. A baby giraffe is
 13 almost 6 feet tall when it is born. It can then grow to be almost 18 feet
 30 tall! Because it is so tall, it takes a giraffe a long time to stand up. So, to
 48 be safe, giraffes sleep standing up. Then, if predators come after them,
 60 they are ready to run. Lions, hyenas, and wild dogs prey on giraffes.
 73 Giraffes have to be careful when they rest or bend down to drink.
 86 Sometimes, giraffes in a herd take turns resting or drinking. That way,
 98 one giraffe is always on the lookout for danger. Giraffes have very good
 111 eyesight. They can spot danger a long way away. Giraffes can run from
 124 danger. In fact, they are fast runners. They can run up to 35 miles an
 139 hour! Giraffes can even outrun most horses. Their speed helps them to
 151 outrun their enemies. They also have strong hooves that they can use to
 164 kick out an enemy.

168 Giraffes have long necks but make very little noise. Scientists used
 179 to think that giraffes were mute. They now know that giraffes do make
 192 noises. These noises are called infrasounds. These sounds cannot be
 202 heard by humans. Giraffes also have long tongues. Their tongues are
 213 between 18 and 21 inches long. Giraffe tongues are prehensile. That
 224 means that the tongue is able to grab and hold on to objects. Giraffes
 238 need a long neck and a special tongue in order to eat. The giraffe's
 252 favorite food is the thorny leaf that grows on the acacia tree. Without a
 266 long neck, the giraffe could not reach the tops of tall trees to eat their
 281 tender leaves. Without the tongue and long lower lip, those same leaves
 293 would be hard to pick off the tree tops.

302 The giraffe's coat is covered with yellow and brown spots. Its coat
 314 helps the giraffe to blend in with trees and tall grasses in the wild. No
 329 two giraffes have exactly the same pattern of spots on their coats. In the
 343 wild, giraffes live together in herds of 5 to 45 animals. Giraffes are quiet,
 357 peaceful animals that are favorites of children all over the world.
 368

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

The Sioux: Buffalo Hunters

0 The Sioux are a Native American tribe. Many years ago, they lived
12 in what is now North Dakota and South Dakota. The Sioux were buffalo
25 hunters. They did not live in one place. They moved to follow the buffalo.
39 The Sioux lived in tents called tipis. They took their tipis with them when
53 they moved. Whole villages traveled together.

59 The buffalo was very important to the Sioux. They used every part
71 of the buffalo. Many meals were made from buffalo meat. Buffalo skin
83 was used in two ways. One way was to tan it. Tanning made the skin soft.
99 Then it could be used like cloth. Another way to use buffalo skin was to
114 turn it into rawhide. Rawhide was as hard as leather. It could be used to
129 make drums or bags.

133 The Sioux slept on buffalo hides. Buffalo hair was woven into belts
145 or ropes. Buffalo bones were used to make tools and toys. A buffalo's
158 stomach could be made into a pot. The Sioux believed that the buffalo's
171 tongue was special. They kept it to use in tribal ceremonies. Even buffalo
184 droppings were saved. They were used for campfire fuel.

193

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Cesar Chavez: Champion of Migrant Farm Workers

0 Cesar Chavez was born in 1927. He lived in Yuma, Arizona, with
12 his family. His grandfather had come to the U.S. from Mexico in 1880.
25 He hoped for a better life for his family. Cesar's father was a farmer. He
40 worked hard to grow crops on his own land. He also ran the general
54 store.

55 In 1937, the Chavez family did not have enough money to pay taxes
68 on their land. So they lost their farm. The family was forced to move. The
83 family became migrant farm workers. Migrant workers follow the crops.
93 They go from place to place. Farm owners hire these workers to pick ripe
107 fruit. Migrant farm work was hard. The farmers lived in shacks. They
119 did not have running water. Some migrant workers lived in their pick-
131 up trucks. Some children had to work and did not go to school. Other
145 children changed schools many times. Cesar Chavez went to more than
156 30 schools in nine years.

161 Most of the farm workers spoke only Spanish. The farm owners
172 spoke only English. It was hard for them to talk to each other. Cesar saw
187 that some farm owners did not treat the workers well. The farm owners
200 did not pay well. They did not give the workers a decent place to live.

215 Cesar grew up to be a leader of migrant farm workers. He helped
228 them to learn to read and write in English. He helped them to become
242 U.S. citizens. Cesar started a farm workers union. He led a strike against
255 the farm owners. A strike is refusing to work until people do what you
269 want. Cesar made the owners work with the union. Cesar used strikes
281 and boycotts to help the workers. A boycott is when people refuse to
294 buy something. The farm owners finally agreed to pay better wages. The
306 owners also gave workers better housing. Cesar Chavez fought very hard
317 to bring a better life to migrant farm workers.

326

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Scott Joplin: Father of Ragtime Music

0 Scott was born in Texas in 1868. He came from a musical family.
 13 His parents played music as a hobby. Scott's mother played the banjo. His
 26 father played the fiddle. Not many black men made a living playing music
 39 in those days. Scott's parents hoped things would be different for Scott.

51 Scott's mother cleaned houses for a living. She took Scott to work
 63 with her. Scott played the piano in the houses where she worked. He
 76 liked to play songs by Stephen Foster. Scott's mother worked hard to pay
 89 for his piano lessons. In those days, there were not many schools for
 102 black children. Scott did not go to school until he was a teenager. But he
 117 worked very hard. Scott played the piano every day. When Scott was 17,
 130 he left home to get a job. He played piano in St. Louis at the Silver Dollar
 147 Saloon. When Scott was 28 years old, he went to college to study music.

161 Scott played a kind of music called ragtime. It had a bouncy rhythm.
 174 Ragtime was first called "ragged time." People thought it sounded like a
 186 piece of torn, ragged paper. Scott became friends with John Stark. John
 198 was a white man. It was unusual at that time for a black man and a white
 215 man to be friends. John helped Scott publish his music. They published
 227 more than 50 songs. "Maple Leaf Rag" was the most famous. It was
 240 published in 1899. "Maple Leaf Rag" was the first piece of sheet music to
 254 sell 1 million copies.

258 Scott also wrote two operas. The first one was called "A Guest of
 271 Honor." The original music score was lost. It has never been found. The
 284 second opera was named "Treemonisha." It was performed only one time,
 295 in 1915. Scott died two years later. He was buried in an unmarked grave.
 309 Fifty-seven years after his death, "Treemonisha" was performed again.
 319 Everyone who saw the opera loved it. It is considered to be the first
 333 American opera. "Treemonisha" was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1976.

343 Today, Scott Joplin's grave has a headstone. It reads "American
 353 Composer."
 354

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

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Level 4 Practice Passages

- 401 Wind: Friend or Foe?
- 402 The Giant Panda: The World's Best-Loved Animal
- 403 Blankets of Air Above Us
- 404 Super Waves
- 405 Tigers: The Largest Cats
- 406 The Great Wall of China: The Longest Graveyard
- 407 Water Bugs: Aquatic Insects
- 408 The Moon: Is It Really Made of Green Cheese?
- 409 Hummingbirds: Small and Fast
- 410 The Koala: Is It a Bear?
- 411 Bats: Flying Creatures of the Night
- 412 Hero Street U.S.A.: Home to U.S. Veterans
- 413 Gabriela Mistral: Teacher and Nobel Prize-Winning Author
- 414 Baboons: The Biggest Monkeys
- 415 Wilbur and Orville Wright: The Flying Brothers
- 416 Hurricanes: Harmful Storms
- 417 Mexico: U.S. Neighbor
- 418 The Five Oceans of the World
- 419 The London Bridge: From England to Arizona
- 420 The Hopi: Native Americans of the Southwest
- 421 Crispus Attucks: African American Patriot
- 422 The Azores: Portuguese Islands
- 423 Olympic Sports: An Ancient Beginning
- 424 Native North Americans: The First Settlers
- 425 Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse: Battle of the Little Bighorn

Wind: Friend or Foe?

0 Wind is moving air. The air around the earth is always moving.
 12 That is because the earth is continually spinning. When the sun heats the
 25 air, it becomes lighter. Lighter air moves more quickly. Lighter, hotter air
 37 becomes strong wind. How hot or cold the air is determines how quickly
 50 it moves. Winds are always blowing somewhere on the earth.

60 Wind can be a big help to us. There are many examples of how
 74 wind is helpful. Wind power pumps water from wells deep in the earth.
 87 Wind power also generates electricity. Windmills in Holland have kept
 97 the seawater from flooding low areas of the small country. Wind helps
 109 power sailboats and makes kites fly. Wind also cools us on hot, summer
 122 days.

123 But the wind can also be harmful. Strong winds in storms can
 135 damage buildings. Winds spinning in a tornado have destroyed parts of
 146 towns and cities. They have also killed many people. Hurricane winds
 157 form over warm waters. They blow into the land from the sea and cause
 171 great property damage and loss of life. Wind that has been warmed by
 184 forest fire becomes stronger. It blows the fire over larger areas of trees.
 197 Forest fires and their winds cause many trees to burn and many animals,
 210 houses, and people to be harmed.

216 We will always have wind because of the air surrounding our earth.
 228 Sometimes the wind is helpful to us. But at other times, wind can be
 242 harmful.

243

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

The Giant Panda: The World's Best-Loved Animal

0 The giant panda bear is a favorite of many people. Giant pandas are
13 black and white animals. They are big and furry. They are cute and fun
27 to watch. Pandas live in China. They live in bamboo forests. The bamboo
40 forests grow in the mountains of southwest China.

48 The giant pandas eat bamboo. They only eat one kind of bamboo.
60 This type of bamboo can suddenly grow flowers. The bamboo flowers
71 for no reason at all. No one knows why or when the flowers will grow. It
87 can happen anytime. The bamboo may flower once every ten years. Or it
100 may go many more years without flowering. After the bamboo flowers,
111 it dies. This happens all at once. Then the bamboo forests all over China
125 die. This is very bad for the giant panda. It takes many months for the
140 bamboo to grow again. Without bamboo, the giant pandas have no food.
152 Many of the giant pandas die of hunger.

160 Only about 1,000 giant pandas live in the world. This is not a big
174 number. Pandas are in danger. They may become extinct. That means
185 that pandas would no longer exist. The next time the bamboo flowers,
197 many pandas may not survive. People want to help the giant pandas.
209 They study bamboo forests. They try to learn more about the giant panda.
222 The people of China set aside large areas of land. This land is to grow
237 bamboo for the giant pandas. No one can live in these areas. The Chinese
251 people hope that they can help the giant pandas. No one wants the panda
265 to become extinct.

268

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

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Blankets of Air Above Us

Blankets on our beds help keep us warm at night. Our earth has blankets of air that do the same thing. In the atmosphere above us, there are four blankets of air that help keep us warm and safe on Earth.

The first blanket of air closest to Earth is called the troposphere. The troposphere is where we live. It contains the air we breathe and the warmth we need. The troposphere has most of our weather in it. Seventy-five percent of the atmosphere's total mass is found in this layer. It also has most of the water vapor of the atmosphere. The seasons of the earth occur in this first layer.

The second blanket of air in our atmosphere is the stratosphere. The stratosphere has a very important part that protects us. That part is the ozone layer. The ozone part of the stratosphere keeps the sun's harmful rays away from the earth. The stratosphere does not have much moisture. Therefore, it does not have many clouds. For that reason, airline pilots like to fly in the stratosphere.

The third blanket of air is the coldest layer in the atmosphere. It is called the mesosphere. Its name means "in between." The mesosphere becomes colder as its altitude increases. There are many strong winds in the mesosphere. These winds blow from west to east in the winter. In the summer, they blow from east to west.

The last layer of air around our earth is called the thermosphere. Its name means "warm place." It is the highest and the largest layer. This layer is very hot. Its temperature can be thousands and thousands of degrees. It is made up of gases. These gases have temperatures which vary. At the top of the thermosphere is where space begins.

The atmosphere of our earth is made up of these four blankets of air. Each one of them is important for life on Earth.

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____

Super Waves

0 When people see waves on an ocean or on a lake, they may think of
 15 surfboards and wave runners. They probably don't give much thought to
 26 how strong those waves are. They also may not think about the changes
 39 those waves are bringing about. Every wave that comes ashore brings
 50 some change with it.

54 Winds start the waves. Winds that blow across the seas make the
 66 waves. The waves move across the surface of the seas until they meet the
 80 land or shoreline. When the waves meet the shoreline, they may change.
 92 For example, if the winds are blowing strongly, the waves will be very
 105 big. The big waves come crashing into the coast and bring a lot of power
 120 with them. The powerful waves continually pound the rocks on the land
 132 into small pieces. They do this again and again. The smaller pieces of
 145 rock end up on the floor of the ocean. The waves also take dirt and sand
 161 from one shore and move it to another shoreline. The waves and the
 174 wind are constantly changing the shoreline. In one place, they remove
 185 land and rocks. In another, they add to the land. The winds and the
 199 waves they create are powerful change forces on our shores. People try to
 212 build walls and barriers to stop them, but usually the wind and the waves
 226 win the battle.

229

Total Words Read _____

- Errors _____

= CWPM _____