



Name _____ Date _____

ALIEN INVASION

Bounce! Bounce! Bounce! Ethan slowly opened one of his eyes. Who was bouncing on his bed? Between the crack of his eyelids, Ethan saw a little green figure jumping on his bed. Ethan closed his eye. There is no way a green figure could be jumping on his bed. Ethan opened both of his eyes this time and saw a green figure smiling at him.

"Onal;xnc," said the green creature.

Oh, wow! This is going to be a tough one to believe, thought Ethan to himself. He smiled and closed his eyes again. He needed time to think about this. Just then, he heard footsteps coming down the hall. It sounded like his mom.

"Ethan? What are you doing? Settle down in there," called his mom as she passed.

"Mom, it's not me!" yelled Ethan.

"Right, Ethan," answered Mom.

"I knew it," said Ethan. "Mom, come here!"

"Just a minute!" called Mom.

There was a look of panic on the face of the green creature. It seemed to sense something bad was going to happen. It hopped off the bed and scurried over to the closet door.

A few moments later, Ethan's mom came through the door.

"Okay, Ethan, let's hear your story," said Mom.

"Alright, here's my story: I woke up and there was a little green creature, sort of like an alien, sitting right on my bed," explained Ethan.

"Right," said Mom.

"You think I'm crazy, but look inside the closet and you will see proof!" said Ethan. Ethan's mom walked over to the closet and opened the door.

STORY QUESTIONS

- A theme to this story could be . . .
 - "There he goes again."
 - "Make a wish, and it will come true."
 - "If there's a will, there's a way."
 - "Seeing is believing."
- According to the passage, how did Ethan's mother feel about Ethan's story?
 - She believed him.
 - She grounded Ethan for telling tall tales.
 - She made plans to see if he was right.
 - none of the above
- The best way to find the answer to the previous question is to . . .
 - try to remember.
 - reread the first paragraph and determine the main idea.
 - reread the entire passage.
 - skim the passage searching for clues about the mother's reaction.



Name _____ Date _____

CRIME DOESN'T PAY

There once was a fox that decided to rob a bank. He was tired of working at his job and knew exactly where all of the doors to the bank were located. He knew the names of all the bank tellers and when the bank opened.

The next morning, he pulled up next to the bank, slipped into his disguise, and walked up the steps of the bank. When he got to the door, the door was locked. A sign explained that the bank was closed for a holiday.

"What?" stuttered the fox. "How can the bank be closed today?"

"Today is a bank holiday," explained the doorman.

The fox stomped to his car with an angry scowl. When he got to his car, he saw a white paper blowing on his windshield.

"What is this?" roared the fox. It was a parking ticket. "How can this be?" he cried. "I can't believe I got a parking ticket!"

The fox climbed into the car, slammed on the gas pedal, and rushed into the stream of traffic. Cars had to swerve to miss the fox. The fox didn't care. He was mad. After a few moments, he looked in his rearview mirror. He screamed when he saw blue and red lights flashing. "This can't be!" said the fox. "There is no way that I will ever rob a bank. It's just too expensive."

STORY QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of the word *scowl* as used in this passage?
 - a. curious look
 - b. glare
 - c. shock
 - d. anger
2. After reading this story, explain how it shows that crime never pays.

3. Which sentence explains how the fox felt about his original plan?
 - a. The fox also knew that his disguise would be important.
 - b. The fox climbed into the car and turned on the ignition.
 - c. The fox was feeling pretty good about his plan.
 - d. His costume had a mask and a cape.



Name _____ Date _____

NOT INVITED

Soon after Sandy got to school, Erica showed up. Sandy noticed Erica shove a bag in her desk. She wondered what it was. Later in the morning, Sandy saw Erica slip something to Jill under the desk. When she saw Erica slip something to Beth at lunch, she couldn't resist.

"What are you doing, Erica? Are you having a party without me?" demanded Sandy.

"Oh, Sandy, it's nothing," said Erica.

"What kind of friend has a party and doesn't invite her best friend?" thought Sandy. She knew her birthday wasn't coming for another six months.

Sandy sat on the bus with another girl and made sure there wasn't room for Erica. Erica sat with someone else, and Sandy noticed that she gave this girl an envelope, too.

"The nerve!" thought Sandy.

That night after dinner, there was a knock on the door. Sandy was surprised to see Jill from next door. She invited Sandy to go with her to Erica's party.

"I'm not going," explained Sandy. "We just aren't friends anymore."

"Oh, you have to go," said Jill, and she took Sandy's arm.

Imagine Sandy's surprise when the door opened at Erica's house and everyone screamed, "Surprise!"

"What? It's not my birthday," said Sandy.

"That's right. This is a half-birthday party. If I did it on your birthday, then it wouldn't be a surprise," said Erica, and she gave Sandy a hug.

STORY QUESTIONS

- Which sentence shows how Sandy felt about Erica?
 - "What kind of friend has a party and doesn't invite her best friend?"
 - "What? It's not my birthday."
 - "I'm not going."
 - "What are you doing, Erica?"
- The first paragraph shares with the reader . . .
 - how to solve the problem.
 - what the problem was.
 - the disagreements between the children.
 - the relationship between the children.
- What is the main idea of the passage?
 - Being creative and using many resources can help you accomplish a task.
 - If you try hard enough, you can do it.
 - It's important to knock out your competition.
 - Don't jump to conclusions.



Name _____ Date _____

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Albert Einstein was born in Ulm, Germany, in 1879. As a young boy, Einstein lived in Munich and Milan. At the age of five, his father showed him a compass and explained how it worked. Albert was intrigued with the idea that something in “space” made the needle work. At this time, Albert’s mother also insisted that he learn to play the violin.

Albert was not considered very bright in school, and some even thought he had dyslexia and other learning problems. Many thought he was very slow. Nonetheless, school would go on to be very important to Albert, and he would go on to become a professor.

He eventually went to school in Switzerland, where he graduated from the Federal Institute of Technology. He then worked in a patent office and on his doctorate degree. He later became a professor of physics. Einstein developed the theory of relativity and received a Nobel Prize in physics in 1921. He became famous throughout the world, which is very unusual for a scientist.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. Why was Albert Einstein so successful in his life?
 - a. People felt sorry for him and took pity on him.
 - b. He did not let what other people thought of him get him down.
 - c. He learned to say no when it was most important.
 - d. He was able to become famous worldwide.
2. What can you learn about Albert Einstein from reading this passage?
 - a. He was curious.
 - b. He was very learning disabled.
 - c. He was denied U.S. citizenship.
 - d. He was placed in an orphanage.
3. Which of the following statements is true, based on information in the passage?
 - a. Albert Einstein flunked out of his school.
 - b. Albert Einstein refused to play the violin.
 - c. Albert Einstein was given the Nobel Prize.
 - d. Young scientists began writing letters to Albert Einstein.
4. Which of the following would make a great title for this passage?
 - a. “The Theory of Relativity”
 - b. “Albert Einstein vs. The Scientific World”
 - c. “Einstein’s Education”
 - d. “A Brief Story of Albert Einstein”



Name _____ Date _____

THE ARMADILLO

The armadillo is probably one of the most unusual-looking animals. It looks a lot like the dinosaurs that used to walk the Earth. Armadillos can live in many places throughout the United States and other parts of the world, but they are most prominent in the state of Texas.

The armadillo has a very tough shell with bands of very strong tissue. These bands are able to slide over each other, which allows the armadillo to roll up like a ball. This is how the armadillo is able to protect itself. It is like the armadillo is protected by a shield of armor. Most animals are unable to break through this tough skin. An armadillo lives in a burrow that it digs itself. The armadillo has to live in places where the dirt is easy to dig; otherwise, it cannot dig itself a home. They have very strong claws that help them dig.

The armadillo's main diet is insects. They eat ants, termites, beetles, grubs, worms, and other small insects. These animals are also known for their strange behavior. If an armadillo is startled, it will jump into the air. Sometimes it will even jump three feet high! It also makes a squealing sound. Armadillos are interesting animals!

STORY QUESTIONS

1. A good title for this reading passage would be . . .
 - a. "The Armadillo State."
 - b. "Locating an Armadillo."
 - c. "The Basics of the Armadillo."
 - d. "The Squeal of an Armadillo."
2. After reading the passage, what can you guess is one similarity between an armadillo and an anteater?
 - a. They both live in Texas.
 - b. They both eat ants.
 - c. They both squeal.
 - d. They both jump in the air when startled.
3. The author wrote this passage to . . .
 - a. justify keeping armadillos in captivity.
 - b. inform the reader of how armadillos are mistreated.
 - c. share general information about armadillos.
 - d. raise awareness of the shrinking armadillo population.
4. If you wanted to find out more about armadillos, you could . . .
 - a. read a book about how armadillos dig their burrows.
 - b. watch a television program about insects.
 - c. meet somebody who lives in Texas.
 - d. watch a television program about the different types of armadillo.



Name _____ Date _____

THE ENCOUNTER

It was very cold outside, and Jeff was freezing. He had on a bunch of blankets, but he could still see his breath in the air. Jeff and his family had come up the mountain for a weekend of skiing and snowmobiling.

Jeffrey knew the fire needed more fuel. He could hear his dad snoring, so he knew that he was fast asleep. He put on his slippers and coat. Opening the door, he could see the fresh blanket of snow on the ground.

As he turned the corner, he found himself face to face with a bear. Jeff gulped. He froze, pondering what he should do at this moment. The bear looked at the ground and began pawing around. Jeff knew this was his only moment, so he jumped and ran to the front door.

He slammed the door shut. Nothing happened. Jeff crept to the window and peered outside. The bear was still standing there as if nothing had happened.

“What are you doing, Jeff?” asked his mother sleepily.

“Oh, playing hide-and-seek,” explained Jeff.

“At this hour?” grumbled his dad. “Why don’t you get some firewood?”

“Oh, I tried,” said Jeff. He jumped on his parents’ bed and said, “We are going to have to get warm the old-fashioned way. I don’t think the bear outside wants to share the firewood.”

“Huh?” asked Jeff’s mother. Jeff just dove deeper in the blankets. He knew there was no way to get them to believe this!

STORY QUESTIONS

1. According to the story, you could determine that Jeff is . . .
 - a. intelligent.
 - b. immature.
 - c. friendly.
 - d. helpful.
2. Which paragraph helps you answer the previous question?
 - a. second paragraph
 - b. first paragraph
 - c. fourth paragraph
 - d. third paragraph
3. Why wouldn’t Jeff’s parents believe him about the bear?
 - a. Bears aren’t found in that part of the forest.
 - b. Jeff told false stories a lot and couldn’t be trusted.
 - c. The bear never really existed.
 - d. It is a rare thing to stand face to face with a bear.



Name _____ Date _____

GEOLOGY

Geology is the study of the history of Earth. It is thought that Earth is about 4.6 billion years old. It has a very long history. Rocks provide a lot of important information about what happened in the past. Geologists study rocks to determine how they were made.

There are a few rocks that are made of just one mineral—such as marble or quartzite—but most rocks are made up of more than one mineral. Most rocks have elements such as silicon, carbon, iron, and oxygen.

The outer layer of the Earth is called the crust. At this point, we are not able to directly study anything below the Earth's crust. We are only able to drill down a few miles. This makes it difficult to study what is going on inside the Earth, but rocks and the ground are constantly being shuffled and pushed around through the years.

One way that rocks are formed and built up is from volcanic activity. Magma lies beneath the Earth's crust and is forced to the surface. Rocks are moved and overturned from earthquakes. All rocks are broken down by a process called weathering. The weather plays a role in erosion and the breakdown of rocks. Water, rain, ice, and wind all contribute to the breaking down of rocks.

STORY QUESTIONS

- Which statement explains how scientists learn about the history of the Earth?
 - All rocks break down by being exposed to the weather.
 - Geologists study rocks to determine how they were made.
 - All rocks are combinations of one or more minerals.
 - One way that rocks are formed and built up is from volcanic activity.
- The main idea of this passage is . . .
 - to inform the reader about what happens when a volcano explodes.
 - to inform the reader about the connection between the earth's crust and rocks.
 - to inform the reader about how important erosion is to breaking down rocks.
 - to share general information about the geology and the study of rocks.
- Where can you find information about how rocks are formed and broken down?
 - second paragraph
 - not in the passage
 - fourth paragraph
 - third paragraph