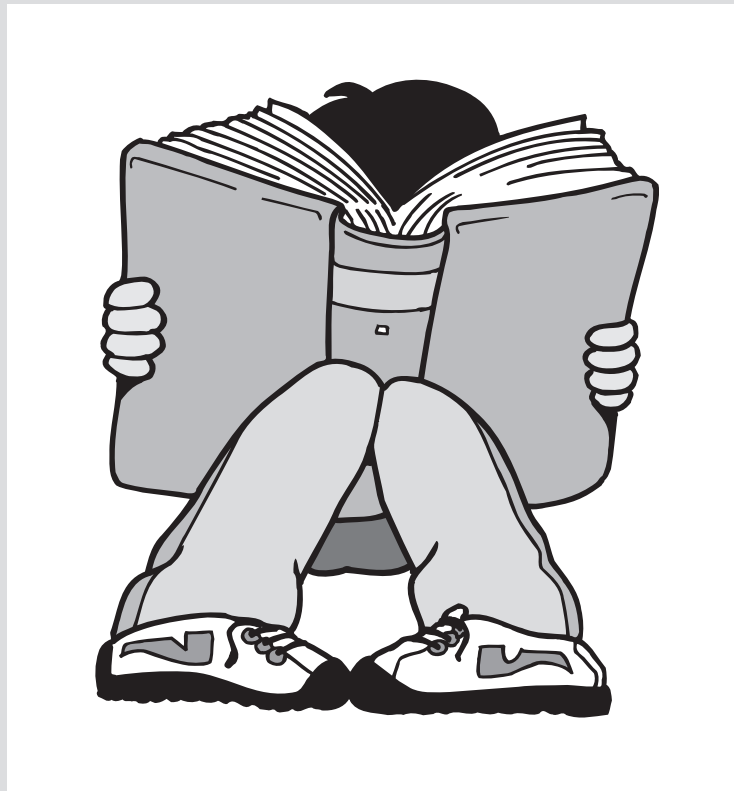


STUDENT TEST BOOKLET

6-8 Week Skills Assessments for
Reading Comprehension and Fluency



GRADE 4
Weeks 24-36

Student Name _____

DIRECTIONS: Read the story carefully. Then read each question and fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

Stuck on the Ground Floor: Otis Elevators

Nathan Aaseng

In Elisha Otis's time, the average person was not interested in riding an elevator. They thought elevators were too dangerous. Otis improved elevators. He worked hard to overcome people's fears by showing that his elevator was safe. Before he died, Otis was slowly winning over the public. He paved the way for modern skyscrapers.

Otis was born in 1811. He grew up on a farm, but he had no interest in raising crops. Otis tried many different jobs. He built a gristmill in Vermont but did not earn enough money to keep it going. After building carriages for several years, he tried operating a sawmill. Business was no better for Otis than it had been in the old days. So he gave up milling for good.

After working briefly as an inventor and a mechanic, Otis opened a shop in Albany, New York. He intended to build small machines. He had barely begun his business, using water from a stream for power, when the city claimed the stream for its water supply.

Otis was still looking for a way to use his talents. In 1852, a company hired him as a master mechanic. It was expanding its business into New Jersey. Heavy, bulky equipment had to be hauled up to the second floor. Otis had to build an elevator that could move the freight safely.

A tinkerer by nature, Otis tried to improve the elevator designs then in use. He noticed that elevators depended too much on a single cable. If that cable snapped, nothing could prevent the whole works from crashing down. Otis thought the system was too risky to lift thousands of pounds of machinery. He looked for a backup system. He wanted to prevent disaster if the rope should break.

The device he came up with used a simple wagon spring. The ends of the spring were attached to the top of the elevator platform. The middle of the spring was connected to the overhead lifting cable. If the cable broke, the tension on the spring would disappear, and the spring would straighten out. Its ends would then catch in ratchets on the side rails of the elevator shaft. The platform would be held in place. Then a new cable could be attached.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.

1. Before building elevators, which of the following was **not** an occupation of Elisha Otis?
 - A. carriage builder
 - B. gristmill operator
 - C. tightrope walker
 - D. mechanic

2. In 1852, a company hired Elisha Otis to
 - A. keep its passenger elevators operating.
 - B. build a safe freight elevator.
 - C. build a machine factory.
 - D. manufacture small machines.

3. Otis improved the elevator designs then in use by
 - A. installing a safety device.
 - B. making the cable stronger.
 - C. adding a second cable.
 - D. installing a warning light.

4. Which word **best** describes Elisha Otis's approach to building elevators?
 - A. aimless
 - B. inventive
 - C. unskilled
 - D. wealthy

The safety hoist worked well. The company completed its move with no problems. Otis didn't realize that he might have invented something of value to many people. He was satisfied knowing the job was done well. Then it was time to move on to something else.

Otis was still searching for a successful career. The tales of the gold strike in the West impressed him. So, Otis prepared to take his family to California. Just before he left he received an urgent request. A cable on a freight hoist at a factory had recently snapped. This caused a terrible accident. The owner had heard about Otis's safety device. He wanted it for his factory. Otis postponed his move. He agreed to install two safety elevators at the plant. Before he had finished this job, a picture frame business asked if he could build a similar hoist for them.

This sudden interest made Otis realize that he had found something very valuable. He formed the E.G. Otis Company in 1853. However, his business floundered almost as soon as he started it. The initial interest in his safety elevator was followed by silence. Stories of awful elevator accidents were far too common. Everyone could imagine the terror of hearing the cable snap, then feeling the elevator fall out from under them. Otis received only a few requests from merchants. They were not willing to trust their goods to the strength of a cable rope.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.

5. Otis decided to start his own elevator company because
- A. he was fired from his job.
 - B. he didn't want to work for other people.
 - C. he was searching for a successful career.
 - D. the company went out of business.
6. After Otis started his elevator company, why did he have trouble selling elevators to other stores?
- A. The stores thought the elevators were too expensive.
 - B. The stores didn't think elevators were necessary.
 - C. The elevators were too small for people.
 - D. People still thought elevators were too dangerous.
7. What does the word *floundered* mean in the third paragraph?
- A. ran into trouble
 - B. improved
 - C. failed
 - D. succeeded

His latest enterprise was sinking quickly. Otis desperately sought a way to prove his elevator was safe. The chance came in 1854. The American Institute Fair had allowed him to set up a demonstration in the main hall of New York's Crystal Palace. Otis set up the most dramatic situation he could imagine. He created elevator accidents with himself aboard!

He built a large elevator in the hall. While people watched, he stepped onto the elevator platform. He had it lifted four stories above the crowd. An assistant cut the cable. Then the platform plummeted toward the ground. The onlookers gasped and screamed in horror. Each time, Otis's safety device brought the elevator to a quick halt in midfall.

Repeated demonstrations of Otis's safety device slowly overcame the public's fear of elevators. He installed 15 elevators in 1855 and 27 the following year. All of them were designed to handle freight and not people. In 1857 he was asked to construct the world's first safety passenger elevator. It was built in a five-story china store in New York City.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.

8. Otis finally convinced the public that his passenger elevators were safe when he
- A. demonstrated how his safety device worked.
 - B. advertised his elevators in newspapers.
 - C. gave people free elevator rides.
 - D. helped a company complete its move.
9. Otis went from one business to another until he finally built a successful elevator manufacturing business. What does this show about Otis?
- A. He didn't like working with people.
 - B. He wasn't very responsible.
 - C. He never gave up.
 - D. He only liked to build elevators.
10. In the first paragraph of the story (on page 2), the author says that Otis paved the way for modern skyscrapers. What does the author mean?
- A. Otis built modern skyscrapers.
 - B. Otis took satisfaction in a job well done.
 - C. Elevators were designed to handle freight, not people.
 - D. Skyscrapers may never have been built without safe elevators.

STOP

*Please do not turn the page.
You may go back and check your work.*

TOTAL SCORE: ____/10

Passage #1

Refer to “General Directions for **One-Minute** Administration of Reading Passages.”

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Most of Paul’s friends are football fanatics. They 8
 watch the Super Bowl every year. However, Paul 16
 prefers viewing televised stock-car races. He likes 24
 watching the cars speed around the raceway. Each 32
 driver wants to take first place. It is exciting to him 43
 when a driver comes from behind and surpasses the 52
 leader. 53
 The day of his favorite auto race was fast 62
 approaching. The weather forecasters predicted 67
 rain. Paul earnestly hoped the speedway would not 75
 get too slick. Wet asphalt could delay the contest. 84
 The roadway was designed to drain water from 92
 the track. Nevertheless, rainwater could still cause 99
 grease to splatter on the cars’ powerful engines. This 108
 could ignite an engine fire and end the competition 117
 for the driver and his team. 123
 Paul tried to predict who would win. He kept 132
 penciled notes of critical speeds and the number 140
 of laps drivers completed. During the race, he 148
 pretended he was riding with his favorite driver. 156
 He would worry when precious moments were lost 164
 during pit stops. 167
 This avid young fan hopes to someday become 175
 a stock car racer. He wants to win trophies and 185
 earn big prize money. At one time, Paul had thought 195
 it was an impossible dream. Now he was more 204
 determined than ever to pursue his greatest desire. 212

EVALUATING CODES FOR ORAL READING

sky (/) word read incorrectly
 blue sky (^) inserted word
 (□) after the last word read

Comments:

FLUENCY SCORE

Number of Words
 Read Per Minute: _____

Number of Errors: — _____

Number of Words
 Read Correctly: _____

Passing Criterion
 (50th %ile) = 116

Errors include: 1) words read incorrectly; 2) words left out or inserted; 3) mispronounced words; 4) dropped endings or sounds; and 5) reversals. Self-corrections and word repetitions are NOT marked as errors.

Passage #2

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To follow dreams, one must overcome trying 7
 conditions. Maya Angelou is a person who overcame 15
 obstacles. She was raised in a small, rural town in 25
 the south. There, she survived a violent attack at the 35
 age of eight. For quite some time, she was mute. This 46
 means she was unable to speak. Her humble start in 56
 life was the subject of her first book. It was entitled 67
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings. 74

Maya has unlimited talents. She is well known 82
 in several artistic fields. She is a famous author of 92
 poetry and children’s stories. She was the first 100
 African-American woman to have a screenplay 107
 become a feature film. She was a stage performer 116
 and sang in a modern opera. This versatile woman 125
 studied dance with a famous dance instructor. She 133
 also acted in movies and on TV. 140

Her talents have achieved acclaim across the 147
 nation. Maya received a special request from 154
 President Bill Clinton. He asked her to read a poem 164
 when he was sworn into office at the White House. 174
 She was awarded the National Medal of Arts. 182
 Ms. Angelou has won the hearts of people around 191
 the world. 193

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DIRECTIONS: Read the story carefully. Then read each question and fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

Ether Day

William W. Hull

Cancha, a young Inca girl, was lying on a stone table in the middle of a large chamber inside the great sun temple. A priest named Curiaco was leaning over Cancha. He was operating on her head. Her screams echoed throughout the huge stone room and into the settlement outside. Cancha's brother was standing in the shadows of the room. He was praying to stop his sister's pain.

The priest was trying to repair a bone in Cancha's head that had been broken in a fall. Long ago, priests were considered doctors. They often performed operations such as this one. But they had no drugs to put people to sleep or to prevent pain. Such operations had to be done with the patient fully awake.

For almost 10,000 years, similar operations were performed throughout the world. Most patients like Cancha died. This happened because they couldn't stand the pain. In fact, for centuries doctors knew how to repair the human body. However, they couldn't prevent the pain caused by operations. It was this pain more than the injury itself that often proved fatal.

The doctors had tried many different methods of putting their patients safely to sleep. They knew that if the patients could sleep, they wouldn't feel any pain. In ancient times, a Roman naturalist described how the root of the mandrake plant could be used to deaden pain. During the Middle Ages, doctors invented the "sleep sponge." A sponge was boiled all day in water with seeds and roots. When the "sleep sponge" was held under a patient's nose, the patient fell asleep. It was not always successful. Nothing was very successful.

Finally, in the 1830's, a great breakthrough occurred in the United States. A tall, young man named Samuel Colt was giving traveling shows from the back of a covered wagon. He was trying to make money to perfect a pistol he was inventing (the famous Colt pistol). During his show, he would ask volunteers to breathe a gas called nitrous oxide. When they did this, they would break into loud laughter. Sometimes they would dance and sing.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.

1. Long ago, doctors performed operations on people when they were awake because
- A. they were cruel.
 - B. they thought it was safer to keep them awake.
 - C. they thought it was unnecessary.
 - D. they had no drugs to put people to sleep.
2. During operations of long ago, most patients died because
- A. the operation was too painful.
 - B. the doctors were unschooled.
 - C. their wounds became infected.
 - D. the doctors couldn't stop the bleeding.

One time Mr. Colt was putting on a show. At this show, he had some volunteers breathe the gas. However, he had given them too much. Instead of dancing and singing, they fell asleep. Mr. Colt thought his show was a failure. He stopped using the gas. He didn't realize he had discovered a safe way to put people to sleep for operations.

A few years later, Dr. C.W. Long from Georgia did realize how important this gas was. He heard some medical students talking about Colt's gas, which was often called "laughing gas." The students told Dr. Long how to make the gas. But he didn't have the right equipment to manufacture it.

Then he remembered that one of his medicines also made people laugh sometimes when they smelled it. He tried this medicine on some volunteers. He soon discovered that if he let people inhale just the right amount of this drug, called sulfuric ether, they would fall asleep. When he tried it on himself, he awoke after a long sleep. His arms and legs were covered with bruises. He realized that he had banged into things when he was moving about in his sleepy state. Yet, he had felt no pain!

In early March of 1842, Dr. Long had a patient inhale ether long enough to fall asleep. The doctor then cut a large growth from the patient's body. When the patient awoke, he was charged two dollars and sent on his way. He had felt no pain at all.

Dr. Long knew then that he had made an important discovery. He had found something that might be used to stop the horrible pain of operations. Ether might give doctors enough time to operate properly. Yet, Dr. Long did not want to report his discovery. He needed to try it out on more patients. He wanted to control how long his patients slept. He had to learn how to administer just the right amount of ether.

Although Dr. Long was probably the first doctor to use ether this way, he was never given full credit for its discovery. Instead, ether came into general use because of the work of a dentist, Dr. William T.G. Morton. Morton had learned to use laughing gas on his patients to kill pain. He was also studying medicine. He had learned that ether was much like laughing gas in its effect on people. And ether was more reliable.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.

3. What part did Samuel Colt play in the discovery of a safe way to put people to sleep?

- A. He discovered the “sleep sponge.”
- B. He discovered that nitrous oxide puts people to sleep.
- C. He discovered ether.
- D. He discovered that ether puts people into a deep sleep.

4. How did Dr. Long find out about laughing gas?

- A. He read about it in a newspaper.
- B. Samuel Colt told him about it.
- C. Dr. Morton told him about it.
- D. He heard medical students talking about it.

5. Why was ether better than nitrous oxide for putting patients to sleep?

- A. It didn't matter how much of it you gave the patients.
- B. It was cheaper.
- C. It was more reliable.
- D. It was easy to get.

6. Who was the first person to use ether during an operation?

- A. Dr. Morton
- B. Dr. Long
- C. Mr. Colt
- D. a student of Dr. Long

Morton convinced Dr. J. C. Warren that ether could be used to prevent pain during surgery. They arranged for a special demonstration of the use of ether. It took place in October of 1846, at a hospital in Boston. Many people, including a few reporters, doctors, and medical students, came to see this special operation performed by Dr. Warren. This event played a very important part in the history of medicine.

Before the operation, the patient inhaled some ether. Then the patient fell into a deep sleep. Dr. Warren performed the surgery quickly and successfully. As the still-unconscious patient was wheeled from the operating room, the doctor knew that something had finally been found that could prevent the awful pain of operations. That day was declared “Ether Day.” It is still remembered today.

Just a month after this event, Dr. Morton received a letter from Oliver Wendell Holmes, a doctor and novelist. Dr. Holmes praised him on his wonderful discovery. He suggested a name for the discovery: *anesthesia*. This word comes from two Greek words meaning “without sensation.”

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.

7. This selection is called “Ether Day” in recognition of the day when

- A. the word *anesthesia* was suggested.
- B. Dr. Long discovered that ether works.
- C. Dr. Warren was told about ether.
- D. Dr. Warren demonstrated a pain-free operation.

8. What is the story **mainly** about?

- A. how ancient doctors repaired broken bones
- B. how dentists used laughing gas to kill pain
- C. how doctors discovered anesthesia
- D. how, long ago, most patients died from the pain of surgery

9. The word *anesthesia* comes from two Greek words meaning

- A. without sensation.
- B. sleep inducing.
- C. painless surgery.
- D. laughing gas.

10. Another good title for this selection is

- A. “Dr. Warren Discovers Nitrous Oxide.”
- B. “Cruel Operations.”
- C. “Operations Are Unsafe.”
- D. “An Important Medical Breakthrough.”

STOP

*Please do not turn the page.
You may go back and check your work.*

TOTAL SCORE: ____/10

Passage #1

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During the early 1900s, an awful sickness struck 8
 many children. It made victims’ muscles become 15
 lifeless. This disease was called polio. Doctors didn’t 23
 know what caused the dreadful illness. Some people 31
 believed the hot, humid days of August were the 40
 reason. Another theory was that swimming in cold 48
 rivers and lakes brought on the disease. Others 56
 thought peach fuzz was the culprit. So mothers wore 65
 rubber gloves to hold the peaches while peeling them. 74
 Because the disease was widespread, people were 81
 looking for a quick way to ease the suffering. 90

A nurse in Australia developed a way to help 99
 ailing children. She rubbed the patients’ paralyzed 106
 muscles. She claimed it helped improve mobility. 113
 Some doctors didn’t approve of her method. The most 122
 serious cases were taken to the hospital. Children 130
 were placed in iron lungs. These machines were 138
 tightly sealed metal tubes. They helped children 145
 breathe. They forced patients’ lungs to inhale and 153
 exhale air. Neither of these treatments was a cure. 162

The search for a cure was a priority. In 1954, 172
 Doctor Jonas Salk took a scientific approach. First, 180
 he found out polio was a virus. Then he developed 190
 the first vaccine to combat the illness. School children 199
 took part in a blind study. Some were given a shot of 211
 sugar water. Others were given the actual vaccine. 219
 Dr. Salk wanted to see if his cure would work. It did. 231
 To his credit, millions of children have been spared 240
 unnecessary anguish and pain. 244

EVALUATING CODES FOR ORAL READING

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Passing Criterion
 (50th %ile) = 120

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Long ago, pioneers didn’t live close to a doctor. 9
 People were treated with homemade cures when 16
 they were sick. These household mixtures were 23
 made from herbs, salt, and ointments. The remedies 31
 were used for a variety of diseases. To treat a cold, 42
 raw onions were wrapped in a towel and placed on 52
 the ailing person’s chest. A piece of bread soaked 61
 in milk and placed on a wound was said to heal 72
 an infection. Sterilized cotton rags were used for 80
 bandages. A black, silk ribbon loosely tied around 88
 the neck was thought to stop a terrible hacking 97
 cough. 98
 Many children became ill with chicken pox, 105
 measles, and mumps. These childhood diseases 111
 were common. They often went untreated. When 118
 children were ill, they were kept in darkened rooms. 127
 The family tried to take good care of them, but 137
 they had to get well on their own. If an illness was 149
 contagious, a quarantine sign would be placed on 157
 their front door. They had to wait until everyone in 167
 the home was no longer sick. All contaminated 175
 materials were burned to prevent an epidemic. 182
 As doctors moved westward, medicine was easier 189
 to get. However, doctors had to make house calls to 199
 reach people in rural areas. They often had to ride 209
 several miles to reach the home of a sick patient. 219

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DIRECTIONS: Read the story carefully. Then read each question and fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

Kenji Moto the Hermit

Alan Romanoff

There once was a man in Japan named Kenji Moto. Kenji was a hermit by choice. He had been crippled as a boy and had decided to live alone on the side of a hill. He didn't want to stay among people who might pity or scorn him. So, slowly and painfully, he tilled a small rice field for food. He traded the food for fish in the nearby village.

From his humble house on the hill, Kenji could see the village of his birth. It was nearly an hour's walk away. Just beyond the village was the ocean, stretching out as far as the eye could see.

The villagers were mostly fishermen who hauled their living from the ocean. A few of the men and most of the women and children worked in the rice fields which reached from the edge of the village to the slope just below Kenji's hut.

One afternoon as Kenji was toiling in his field, he paused for a moment's rest and gazed out toward the ocean. His casual glance became an intense stare as he saw something strange and frightening on the horizon.

The sky above the ocean was threateningly dark. The ocean seemed to be rising up to engulf the sky. Kenji looked in wonderment, trying to understand what was happening.

Suddenly, he knew what the darkened sky and towering waters meant. Many years ago, long before anyone now living in the village had been born, a tidal wave had come rushing in from the sea. Kenji had heard his grandfather tell how, within an hour, the entire village had been swept away and the land covered with ocean water.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.

1. Which word **best** describes Kenji Moto at the beginning of the story?
 - A. independent
 - B. angry
 - C. bored
 - D. energetic

2. Why does Kenji see the tidal wave long before the villagers are aware of the danger?
 - A. The villagers are asleep in their homes.
 - B. Kenji lives high on a hill.
 - C. Kenji has a telescope.
 - D. The villagers are busy working in their fields.

3. Kenji knew what the towering waters meant. The word *towering* means
 - A. darkened.
 - B. high.
 - C. signaling.
 - D. retreated.

“I must warn the villagers,” thought Kenji. “But how? By the time I could get down there with my crippled leg, the tidal wave would be upon them.”

Desperately, he looked around for some method to signal a warning. However, nothing was large enough to be seen that far away. Then, an idea came to him.

“A fire!” he thought. “A fire would be seen for miles.”

Kenji knew of only one thing large enough to make a fire that bright. He lit a torch and, with quiet resignation, set fire to the rice crop he had cultivated so painfully and that meant life itself to him. Within seconds, the field was ablaze, and Kenji retreated some distance away. When he turned his attention toward the steadily darkening sky, he saw that the wall of water was much closer. He guessed that the full impact of the tidal wave would strike within the hour.

Anxiously, Kenji stared down at the village. “They have to see the fire,” he muttered. “They have to!”

Meanwhile, in the village below, many eyes had spotted the fire on the hill, and an excited crowd had gathered.

“It’s Kenji’s rice field,” said one man.

“Yes,” agreed another, “and if the fire spreads, it will take all our fields.”

“We must hurry and put out the fire, or there will be no rice for any of us this year.”

Within minutes, all the villagers were hastening toward the top of the hill. Even those who were too young or too old to help fight the fire went along to watch.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.

4. What is Kenji's first concern when he sees the tidal wave?
- A. to save his house
 - B. to save his rice crop
 - C. to save the villagers' rice crop
 - D. to warn the villagers of the danger
5. Why doesn't Kenji go down the hill and tell the villagers of the approaching tidal wave?
- A. Kenji can't walk fast enough.
 - B. The tidal wave is still far away.
 - C. He was too frightened.
 - D. The tidal wave washed out the road.
6. Why does Kenji set fire to his rice crop?
- A. to get the villagers' attention
 - B. to harvest his rice crop
 - C. to save his rice crop from the tidal wave
 - D. to burn the villagers' rice fields
7. Why do the villagers rush up the hill?
- A. They want to escape the tidal wave.
 - B. They want to save Kenji.
 - C. They want to save their own rice crops.
 - D. They want to watch the tidal wave.

From his position on the hillside, Kenji saw the parade making its way up the slope. He compared the progress of the villagers to the oncoming wave. “Why don’t they hurry?” he worried aloud. “The big wave is almost here.”

As the villagers climbed higher and higher, they were able to see the wall of water for the first time. Swift runners were sent back to the village to gather important records and to make certain that everyone had left. The rest of the group hurried even faster up the hill.

When the villagers arrived at Kenji’s house, they gathered around him. “It’s fortunate that your rice field caught fire,” said one, “for it brought us here, safe from the giant wave.”

“How did the fire get started?” asked another.

“With this,” said Kenji quietly, holding up the charred and smoking torch.

Only then did the villagers realize that Kenji had deliberately set fire to his field in order to warn them. Not even the most eloquent among them could find words to express their gratitude.

Silently everyone turned to watch the huge wave draw nearer and nearer. When it struck, it would destroy everything they owned. Thanks to Kenji, they were saved and they would rebuild.

Each of them silently vowed there would always be a place in his new home for Kenji Moto, the hermit.

Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.

8. When do the villagers finally realize the danger?

- A. when they are climbing the hill
- B. when they reach Kenji's house
- C. when the tidal wave hits the village
- D. after they put out the fire

9. The genre of this story is

- A. autobiography.
- B. nonfiction.
- C. realistic fiction.
- D. a play.

10. Another **good** title for this story is

- A. "Villagers Save Their Crops."
- B. "Kenji Moto the Hero."
- C. "No More Rice."
- D. "The Humble House."

STOP

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TOTAL SCORE: _____/10

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Sam and his younger sister were looking for red squirrels and foxes in the backwoods. Suddenly they realized they had wandered far from camp and were lost in unfamiliar terrain. Luckily, Sam had taken a survival course and knew the importance of staying calm. Panicking would only make matters worse.

By the angle of the sun, Sam was able to calculate it was mid-morning. He stood facing east, the direction of the sun. He explained to his sister south was to his right and north was to his left. West was at his back. He knew their family’s campground was on the west edge of a small river. Concentrating on these helpful clues, Sam drew a crude map in the dirt with a stick. They decided to head east.

Walking toward the sun, they soon reached the riverbank. There, they quickly gathered dry twigs. They located a sandy clearing beside the water and used matches from Sam’s survival kit to start a small fire. The kindling began to burn. Sam and his sister steadily placed green leaves and pine needles on the hot flames. Thick, pungent smoke billowed up over the trees. A rescue squad saw the alarming smoke signal and came to investigate. They transported the two siblings safely back to camp.

EVALUATING CODES FOR ORAL READING

sky (/) word read incorrectly
 blue ^ sky (^) inserted word
 (□) after the last word read

Comments:

FLUENCY SCORE

Number of Words
 Read Per Minute: _____

Number of Errors: — _____

Number of Words
 Read Correctly: _____

Passing Criterion
 (50th %ile) = 123

Errors include: 1) words read incorrectly; 2) words left out or inserted; 3) mispronounced words; 4) dropped endings or sounds; and 5) reversals. Self-corrections and word repetitions are NOT marked as errors.

Passage #2

Refer to “General Directions for **One-Minute** Administration of Reading Passages.”

Say these specific directions to the student:

When I say “Begin,” start reading aloud at the top of this page. Read across the page (DEMONSTRATE BY POINTING). Try to read each word. If you come to a word you don’t know, I will say the word for you. Read as quickly and accurately as you can, but do not read SO fast that you make mistakes. Do your best reading.

Plant life is abundant in the deserts of Arizona and New Mexico. There the average rainfall is only about seven inches a year. How have plants learned to survive in these arid, southwestern regions? They have adapted in a variety of ways to this harsh terrain.

Desert plant life does not bloom during phases of drought. If it did, the flowers would wither and die in the remorseless sun. These unique plants are capable of lying dormant for years until it rains. Then once the plants have enough water, flowers quickly mature and bloom.

Most cactus plants have thorns instead of leaves. The surface area of thorns is much smaller than leaves. This reduces the plant’s exposure to the parched, hot air. Therefore, not much moisture can evaporate from the vegetation.

The barrel cactus is short and fat. It is shaped like a round accordion. This allows it to expand during rainfall. When water is absorbed through its roots, it gets bigger. As it loses moisture during the dry season, it contracts.

The creosote bush thrives in the desert. It does not grow in bunches because it doesn’t like sharing the scarce water. It has an unpleasant, acrid aroma. This smell keeps other flora from growing nearby.

These are ways plant life endures the deserts of the United States.

EVALUATING CODES FOR ORAL READING

sky (/) word read incorrectly
 blue sky (^) inserted word
 (□) after the last word read

Comments:

FLUENCY SCORE

Number of Words
 Read Per Minute: _____

Number of Errors: — _____

Number of Words
 Read Correctly: _____

Passing Criterion
 (50th %ile) = 123

Errors include: 1) words read incorrectly; 2) words left out or inserted; 3) mispronounced words; 4) dropped endings or sounds; and 5) reversals. Self-corrections and word repetitions are NOT marked as errors.

NOTES

NOTES

First Edition

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