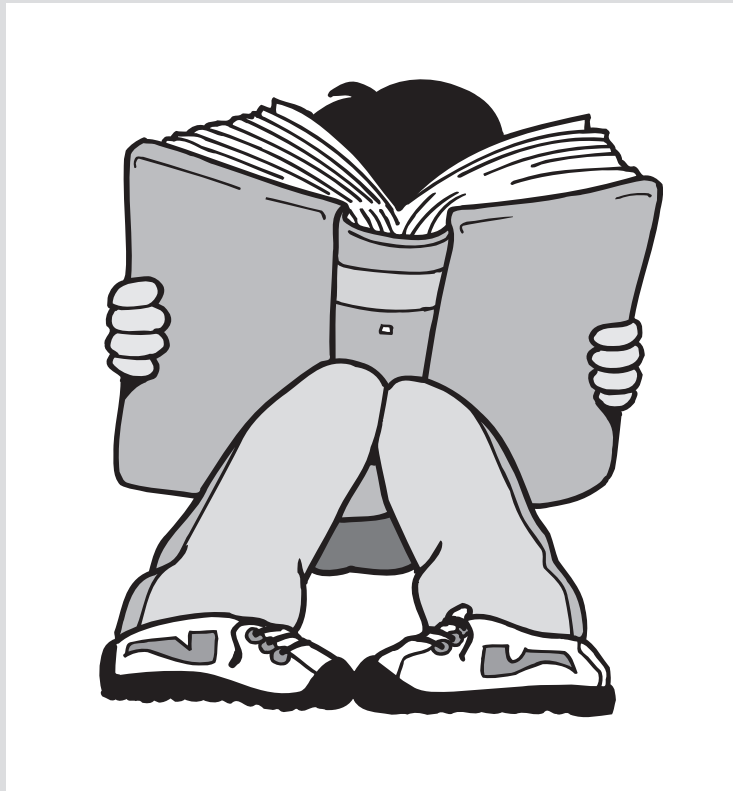


# STUDENT TEST BOOKLET

6-8 Week Skills Assessments for  
Reading Comprehension and Fluency



**GRADE 6**  
**Weeks 24-36**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Secrets of an Old Indian Well

*Karen Callinan*

The two hissing ducks awakened Edward Thompson from a deep sleep. He was staying at one of the Mayan Indian ruins in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula. That day he had studied the old temples and carvings in the jungle city of Chichén Itzá. And so that evening he slept in an ancient building nearby. He kept the wood ducks in his room to eat the cockroaches and tarantulas that wandered in from the night. But small, crawling bugs had never made the ducks hiss so loudly.

The room was dark, and no lights were handy. Edward got out of bed to investigate. Something thick and cold slithered underneath his feet, and Edward toppled to the floor. The ropelike creature began to curl around him. Edward tried to wiggle out of its grip, but the winding creature tightened its hold.

"Bring the lights!" Edward yelled to his Mayan Indian friends sleeping in the other room. They rushed in. Their lighted torches revealed a huge boa constrictor. With a quick swish of a machete, one of the Indians killed the snake. Edward breathed easier.

The jungles of Mexico held many secrets but many dangers as well. While searching for treasure, Edward came face to face with boas and jaguars. Once he nearly lost a leg after stepping into a poisoned thorn trap set by unfriendly Indians. But all these dangerous encounters didn't stop him from doing what he set out to do.

While studying at the university, Edward had read a legend written by a sixteenth-century Spanish bishop about a sacred well at Chichén Itzá, in the jungles of the Yucatán. Bishop de Landa described how the Mayan Indians sacrificed valuable objects, even human lives to their rain god, Chac. The Maya needed rains to grow corn, but sometimes drought threatened this important food crop, so they would throw precious offerings into Chac's well to please him. They hoped Chac would send rain in return.

Edward wondered whether this legend was true. If it was, what ancient and mysterious treasures were buried in the muddy bottom of the Sacred Well of Chichén Itzá?

*Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.*

1. Ancient Mayas threw valuable objects into the Sacred Well in order to
  - A. hide the precious objects from thieves.
  - B. please Chac, their rain god.
  - C. honor Kinich Ahau, their sun god.
  - D. preserve them for future generations.
  
2. Edward Thompson first learned about the sacred well from
  - A. Mayan Indians living at Chichén Itzá.
  - B. a teacher at the university.
  - C. a bishop's description of a Mayan legend.
  - D. the American consul in Mexico.

In 1885, Edward’s dream of discovering these treasures became a possibility when he was appointed American consul in Mexico. During his first years in Yucatán, Edward studied many buildings, roads, tombs, and monuments. In 1894 he bought the land of the sacred well and began to plan how he would systematically explore the pit. The well, he discovered, was huge—almost two hundred feet across at its widest point, one hundred sixty-eight feet at its narrowest. Surrounding the pool was a steep, jagged limestone wall. Out of the rocky sides grew trees that cast mysterious shadows on the water. It was sixty-four feet straight down from the ground to the well water. Fallen trees and plants had piled into the hole, and tons of mud and silt had settled on the bottom. He couldn’t be sure exactly how deep the murky water was, but he knew that exploring in it wouldn’t be easy. It was impossible to tell what lay hidden beneath the soupy, jade-green surface.

Edward returned to the United States and took a course in deep-sea diving from an old sea captain. Then he bought a dredge with a thirty-foot swinging boom and a metal scoop to shovel the mud. Now all Edward needed was money. He asked members of the American Antiquarian Society and the Peabody Museum at Harvard University to help him pay for the digging.

“You’ll never come out alive,” they protested.

Edward explained his plans, and they finally agreed to help him. By the time all the people and equipment were ready, it was 1904. On the 5th of March, Edward and his crew set up the derrick and lowered the bucket. They found only mud.

For weeks and months Edward sifted through muck and more muck. He tossed away bits of trees, bones of jaguars and deer. Then, nothing. Finally, they found old vases. But such relics had been found all over the city. The legend remained unproven.

Doubts grew in Edward’s mind as the weeks passed and nothing of value was unearthed. But one day, as the dredge bucket dropped its dark muck, two small yellow-white lumps caught Edward’s eye. He picked them out and studied them. They looked as if they were formed by human hands, and they had the consistency of resin. Edward tossed them into the embers of the fire. As a wonderful fragrance sweetened the damp air, he remembered what a Mayan friend once told him. Ancient Mayan priests used pom, balls of sticky copal tree sap, as sacred incense to send prayers on smoke clouds to Kinich Ahau, their sun god. Edward had discovered some of this sacred pom in the well. He was ecstatic!

*Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.*

3. What did Thompson do to assure he would have time to explore the sacred well?
- A. He was granted permission from the Mexican government.
  - B. He bought the land surrounding the sacred well.
  - C. He was appointed American consul in Mexico.
  - D. He received permission to dig at the site from Mayan priests.
4. Why did some people have reservations about Thompson's plans?
- A. People thought the Mexican government would reclaim the land.
  - B. People worried about the Mayas becoming angry.
  - C. They thought the project was too expensive.
  - D. They thought the project was too dangerous.
5. According to the story, how was Thompson able to purchase equipment and hire a crew?
- A. He obtained a bank loan.
  - B. He borrowed money from his relatives.
  - C. He asked members of the Peabody Museum to help him.
  - D. He used his own savings.
6. Thompson knew he was on the right track when he found
- A. two small balls of pom.
  - B. some old Mayan pottery.
  - C. human skulls and bones.
  - D. bones of jaguars and deer.

From that day on, the dredge scooped up many more ancient relics. When the bucket started coming up with only mud once again, Edward decided to take the final risk. He put on his diving gear and dove into the well himself. Working in the thick muddy water was highly dangerous, but it certainly paid off.

Edward brought many treasures to the surface by hand. In seven years he retrieved over thirty thousand artifacts, including objects made of gold, jade, copper, wood, and stone, as well as offerings of fabric, pottery, rubber, and pom. He even found human skulls and bones. Edward sent all these treasures to the Peabody Museum at Harvard.

When the Mexican government discovered that they were losing some valuable and culturally important property, they took control of Edward's plantation and filed a claim on the artifacts. The dispute was brought before the Supreme Court of Mexico. But not until 1944, nine years after his death, did the court rule that Edward legally owned the treasure of the well.

Peabody Museum kept most of the artifacts but traded some with Mexico after publishing research papers on them. When the Mexican government took over Edward's plantation, they allowed the Carnegie Institution of Washington, D.C., and Mexico's Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia to restore Chichén Itzá. For sixteen years, from 1924 to 1940, they repaired the historic buildings of Chichén Itzá. Today the Sacred Well of Chichén Itzá, the Temple of Warriors, the High Priest's Tomb, the market, a sweat bath, the largest ball court in the Americas, an ancient observatory, and the towering pyramid of El Castillo attract many visitors.

If it hadn't been for Edward Thompson's dream and his great drive to see it through, the world might still not know of the secrets within an old Indian well and the truth behind an important Mayan legend.

*Now answer the questions about this part of the selection.*

7. What did Thompson do with the valuable objects he found in the well?
- A. He sold them to art collectors in the United States.
  - B. He donated them to the Mexican government.
  - C. He sent them to the Peabody Museum.
  - D. He kept them for himself.
8. Why did the Mexican government file a claim on the artifacts?
- A. They thought Thompson was getting rich.
  - B. They thought the valuable objects rightfully belonged to the Mexican people.
  - C. They wanted to explore the sacred well themselves.
  - D. They worried Thompson was destroying valuable Mexican property.
9. Which statement is an **opinion** in this story?
- A. In 1894, Thompson bought the land of the sacred well.
  - B. If it hadn't been for Thompson's dream, the world would not know the truth behind an important Mayan legend.
  - C. It was sixty-four feet straight down from the ground to the well water.
  - D. Edward returned to the U.S. and took a course in deep-sea diving from an old sea captain.
10. After reading the story, which of the following was most important to Edward Thompson?
- A. finding the Sacred Well of Chichén Itzá
  - B. getting rich by selling the artifacts
  - C. being appointed American Consul in Mexico
  - D. proving the legend of the sacred well was true

# STOP

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

TOTAL SCORE: _____/10
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Passage #1

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.

Around 100 B.C., a tribe called the Anasazi lived in the desert regions of Arizona. Once they were a nomadic tribe. They eventually settled down and colonized. These people were thought to have a primitive culture. However, after examining their ancient society, scientists changed their minds.

These early people built amazing cities. Their dwellings indicated they had an advanced knowledge of architecture. Some of the buildings were three stories high and made from stone. One village had an arena and a ball court. Rooms for religious rites were built throughout their pueblos. Their artistic skills are amply displayed in stone drawings on caves and canyon walls.

The Anasazi’s ability to survive the blistering heat in the high desert plateau was also discovered. Their buildings had a clever structural design. Their homes were constructed above underground stone crevices. Air pockets in the fissures stored chilly night air that was released during the day. This created a highly efficient exchange of air. The cool breezes made afternoons bearable.

Anasazi were able to farm the arid land due to ash from an ancient volcano. Its porous properties retained moisture from scant rainfall. This residue covered eight hundred square miles. The tribe abandoned their adobe villages in the mid-twelfth century A.D. No one knows why. Some people think a severe, extended drought caused the departure. Fortunately, remains of their civilization were not destroyed.

**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) = 144

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.*

Who first discovered America? Usually, the credit goes to Christopher Columbus. In 1492, he landed on this continent and claimed he had found a new world. However, there are ample clues other explorers had reached the shores of North America before Columbus. Evidence suggests people from Asia were here prior to Columbus. Once, a shallow waterway linked the northern part of Asia to Alaska. People from Asia could have traveled between the two continents. Perhaps they were the first humans to have discovered this land. We know Vikings were aggressive explorers. A long-standing debate has taken place over a Viking map of Vinland. Carbon dating of this map suggests they arrived about fifty years before Columbus. Some claim this map is authentic; others say it is a forgery. Men from Portugal traveled to the New World. They sailed along the Atlantic coast. Strange symbols have been found on a massive landmark known as Dighton Rock. They are thought to have Portuguese origins. Are these writings proof these sailors explored America before Columbus? In the end, which country claims the honor of discovering America is a moot point. Native Americans had been here for thousands of years. They had settled in villages from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. However, Columbus’s landing is regarded as the most historically important. Unlike the others, he set up two-way commerce between the Old World and the New World.

**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) = 144

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.

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

## **You Can't Be Timid with a Trumpet**

*Betty Lou English*

*Mark Gould, Associate Principal Trumpet Player  
of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*

When I was in the eighth grade, I wanted to play in the school band, but I was given a test that showed I had no talent, and the conductor wouldn't give me an instrument. So I went out and rented a trumpet because I wanted very much to learn. I did learn, and I did play in the band, and in a year I was its best brass player.

Later, I studied music for four summers at the Interlochen Music Camp in Michigan, and I also learned a lot by playing in jazz bands. You have to be very flexible when you play jazz. Playing in the orchestra is different; it's hitting the target. If you miss a note there, everybody knows it because the trumpet is the most brilliant of the brass instruments. In a climax in a symphony the trumpet comes in above the whole orchestra. You're riding a wave on top of the orchestra. You're soaring. The trumpet is an aggressive instrument; you can't be timid with a trumpet. It's joyful, too. And of course it plays fanfares. It can play softer and louder than any instrument in the orchestra.

A couple of years ago, a friend told me there was an opening for trumpet in the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. So I thought, "Well, I'll audition." I was really surprised when I got the position. I was the only one in the orchestra who hadn't had a formal music background. Playing in the opera, I've learned a lot about music, especially from the singers, because singing is the basis of all music.

I'm still playing my trumpet and I guess I always will because, for me, music is magic.

*Doriot Anthony Dwyer, Principal Flutist  
of the Boston Symphony Orchestra*

It was raining, the trees and bushes heavy with wet green leaves, when I got to Tanglewood to audition for the principal flute of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. When I returned to California, where I was playing second flute with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, weeks went by without any word from Boston. Finally their manager called and offered me the job. There was a lot of excitement—this was the first time a woman had been appointed permanently to a principal position in a major symphony orchestra.

In my family there are examples of other unusual women. Susan B. Anthony, remembered for her fight to give women the vote, was my great-cousin. And my mother, who achieved artistry as a professional flutist, supported herself this way before she married—quite uncommon in those days. Mother was my first teacher, starting me as soon as I could hold the flute properly—when I was about eight. At first the progress was slow and very difficult, partly because I couldn't understand my mother's strictness, which was necessary to learn the three Rs of music—reading, rhythm, and 'rithmetic—and also because music did not yet have any clear meaning to me, even though for years she had sat me down in front of the radio to listen to programs of symphony and opera performances with her. Finally, however, when we went to a Chicago Symphony Orchestra concert—I remember they played the William Tell overture by Rossini—I suddenly understood what music was about, and it thrilled me.

When my parents saw my enthusiasm, they took me backstage to meet the first flutist, Ernest Liegl, and soon arrangements were made for me to study with him. He was a wonderful teacher, giving me regular professional training, in many ways similar to the rigorous coaching an athlete receives in training for the Olympics. This was the beginning of my lifelong fascination with the liquid, moving sound of the flute as well as with the form and beauty of music.

As a soprano voice of the woodwinds, the flute often carries the melody. It can play very fast or be tender and warm, even whining or demanding. The ancient Greeks had entire orchestras of flutes, though the instrument was somewhat different then. The modern flute was developed in the 1800s by Theobald Boehm, who invented the key system in use today.

Underneath one of the keys there is a cork about a quarter-inch thick. One time during a Boston Symphony concert, this cork fell out as I was playing a solo passage in Mendelssohn's Italian Symphony. It is fast music, and with the cork missing, many notes that I played sounded completely wrong, but luckily Charles Munch, the conductor, had a sense of humor. While I was cringing in embarrassment, he was shaking with laughter because of the way it sounded and because he had seen that cork rolling on the floor.

*Now answer the questions about the selection.*

1. Which of the following experiences would best help you understand how Mark felt when the school’s band conductor didn’t give him an instrument?
  - A. Having your parents say that they don’t have enough money to send you to college
  - B. Not receiving the gift you wanted on your birthday
  - C. Failing to get a role in a school play because you can’t act
  - D. Getting second place in a swimming relay
  
2. “If you miss a note... everybody knows it because the trumpet is the most brilliant of the brass instruments.” Used in this context, the word *brilliant* means
  - A. shiniest.
  - B. smartest.
  - C. easiest to find.
  - D. easiest to hear.
  
3. Why was Mark surprised when he was picked to play in the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra?
  - A. He had no formal musical training.
  - B. He thought he wasn’t good enough.
  - C. He had never been to an opera.
  - D. He had only played in jazz bands.
  
4. Which of the following statements would **not** be an appropriate description of Mark Gould?
  - A. He was determined and not easily discouraged by other people.
  - B. He thought he knew more about music than the other people who auditioned for the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.
  - C. He enjoyed different kinds of music.
  - D. He was a hard worker.
  
5. Why was Doriot Dwyer particularly happy when she learned she had been picked to play the flute in the Boston Symphony Orchestra?
  - A. She would be the first woman to get a job with a major symphony orchestra.
  - B. She felt that her famous aunt, Susan B. Anthony, would be proud.
  - C. She was the first woman awarded a permanent, principal position in a major symphony orchestra.
  - D. She knew her mother would be proud.

6. What does Doriot Anthony Dwyer like best about playing the flute?
- A. The flute is beautiful and an easy instrument to play.
  - B. The flute has a fascinating fluid sound that can be used to express a variety of emotions.
  - C. Flute players get to play the best parts.
  - D. No one notices if a flute player makes a mistake.
7. What was Doriot's most embarrassing moment as a musician?
- A. Her flute didn't work properly during a performance.
  - B. She dropped her flute on the floor during a performance.
  - C. She kept making mistakes during a performance.
  - D. She kept losing her place during a performance.
8. How was Doriot's musical background different from Mark's?
- A. She always practiced much longer than Mark.
  - B. She was naturally talented.
  - C. She had formal training with a professional flutist.
  - D. Doriot's mother taught her everything she knows.
9. With which of the following statements would Mark and Doriot most likely agree?
- A. Orchestra musicians should also play in jazz bands.
  - B. Opera is the best kind of music.
  - C. Jazz is the best kind of music.
  - D. Music is a rewarding career.
10. Mark Gould and Doriot Anthony Dwyer were alike in several ways. Which statement below is **not** supported by the text?
- A. Both were willing to take risks.
  - B. Both had parents who played musical instruments.
  - C. Both were dedicated and eager to learn about music.
  - D. Both were surprised when they won their auditions.

**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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John Phillip Sousa is best remembered for his rousing, 9  
 marching music. Known as “The March King,” his most 18  
 famous composition is “Stars and Stripes Forever.” Never 26  
 idle for long, Sousa composed one hundred thirty-six 35  
 marches. He demonstrated his unusual talent as a young 44  
 boy. When he was only thirteen years old, Sousa began an 55  
 apprenticeship with the Marine Band in Washington, D.C. 63  
 By age twenty-six, he had been appointed bandleader. 72  
 The famous band was assigned to the president of the 82  
 United States. This band still plays at official functions. 91  
 Sousa was not just interested in marching bands; he 100  
 enjoyed band concerts in theaters and invented a new kind 110  
 of tuba. The large tuba was perfect for outdoor marching, 120  
 but its blaring sound was too direct for concert halls. 130  
 The tuba’s flared bell, angled parallel to the ground, sent 140  
 sound forward. Concert halls required something different. 147  
 Sousa designed a new brass instrument that was better 156  
 suited for the stage. Then he had the new piece manufac- 167  
 tured. It was a circular tuba with a bell facing upward. 177  
 The sound was sent toward the ceiling instead of into the 188  
 audience. It became known as the sousaphone in honor of 198  
 its inventor. 200  
 During his lifetime, Sousa received several honorary 207  
 degrees and fought for music education and composers’ 215  
 rights. He continued to tour and conduct his own band 225  
 until the age of 77. 230

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)	= <u>147</u>

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.”

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The life of Stephen Foster, like the lives of many talented people in history, has become embedded in folklore. Before he was thirty, Foster had written and published many songs. He was a popular musical genius. He lived in the era of slavery and musical shows. Foster tried to write songs that could be appreciated by all people. He accomplished this impressive feat by composing songs with lyrics that touched the hearts of young and old. His first big hit was “Oh! Susanna.” Songs such as “Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair,” “My Old Kentucky Home,” and “Old Folks at Home” became familiar favorites.

During his lifetime, no copyright laws existed. Composers were not protected from other people stealing their work. Musicians were allowed to rewrite any composer’s song. All they had to do was create a new or different musical arrangement.

Foster realized people were infringing on the ownership of his compositions. So, he would sometimes write his own contracts. At that time, this was a practice considered highly unusual.

Publishing houses also took advantage of him. They made one-time, buy-out payments for his songs. Steven Foster died penniless. Had current copyright laws been in place at the time, he would have received millions of dollars for his creative talents.

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)	= 147

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.

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

## Walk on the Wild Side

*Donna D'Amelio*

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to touch a living sea star or examine the underside of a horseshoe crab? Have you contemplated how an animal survives in the scorching desert? Where do clouds come from, or how close is the nearest star?

If you've asked yourself even one of these questions, there are places you can go to learn the answers. These places are called "living museums."

What makes a living museum different from other museums? Living museums all have the same goal: to preserve and conserve our natural resources and make people aware of the variety of plants and animals in the world and how important each one is to our survival.

To meet these goals, living museums provide something no other museum can. "We provide kids with a one-on-one experience with animals," says George Mathews, Jr., curatorial director at the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News, Virginia.

Kids visiting these museums are encouraged to touch and experience the many exhibits. Whether it's getting a close look at a Gila monster, examining the underground tunnels of a burrowing owl, or scrambling through caves, these museums make learning fun.

At the Virginia Living Museum, visitors are encouraged to experience the "touch tank." The tank is "home" for a variety of sea animals, including whelks, hermit crabs, sea stars, and horseshoe crabs.

In the museum's classrooms, children are challenged to a snake race. They get on the floor and wiggle around like snakes, but they aren't allowed to move any body part that a snake can't move. Other exhibits in the museum include a living beehive and a room filled with night creatures.

The museum also has a nature walk where visitors can view Virginia's wild animals in their natural habitats. "We stay away from the typical zoo setting," George says. "No bars or cement."

So how do these living museums make sure their animals' habitats are just right? It takes a lot of hard detective work. David West, the plant specialist at the Virginia Living Museum, designs the landscapes and grows the plants that make the animals' exhibits look so natural.

"With the exception of sunlight, plants are the most important part of our ecological system," David explains. "People need to understand how important plants are to the health of the world. Plants provide oxygen, stop erosion, and clean our air."



There's no better way to understand about clean air and what's happening in the sky than a visit to the museum's planetarium. "With television and video games, people just don't look up anymore," says Jon Bell, director of astronomy for the museum. As the head of the planetarium, Jon wants to get everyone interested in the wonders of the sky.

The planetarium is equipped with the latest technology—from computers to a star machine. Inside the planetarium, technicians put on a variety of shows. Visitors experience thunderstorms, take a trip underwater, learn why we have rainbows, and examine sunspots on the surface of the sun.

"We make science come alive," says Pete Money, education director for the Virginia Living Museum. "Doing it, touching it, experiencing it. That's what we're all about."

But if you don't live in Virginia, where else can you go? Deep in the Sonora Desert in Arizona, you'll find the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum outside Tucson. It helps young people of all ages understand the delicate balance between plants and animals living in the desert. If you visit, you'll get to travel along an underground tunnel and learn how desert animals survive in the heat. You'll also get to experience the thrill of spelunking through a replica of a cave found in the wild. But keep your eyes open or you'll miss the real bats that call the cave home.

The Living Desert Museum in Palm Desert, California, has some of the world's rarest and most exotic desert animals, including the desert "unicorn," the Arabian oryx. This living museum's botanical gardens represent ten major North American desert regions. Work has already begun on a new exhibit, Eagle Canyon, where you'll come "face to face with the animals that rule the desert's skies, mountains, canyons, and sands."

The High Desert Museum in Bend, Oregon, takes you on a "walk through time" and explores the pioneer settlements of the West. The museum recreates the "legends, lore, and life of the high desert." You can walk beside a trout stream, feed a porcupine, or learn what it was like to be part of a Paiute Indian family.

Yet it isn't all fun and games. At the Virginia Living Museum and at some of the other museums as well, every day is "Earth Day." Staff members encourage visitors to take an active role in doing their part to stop pollution and conserve our natural resources.

"If I had to pick just one thing people could do that would have the most effect, it would be to recycle," says Pete Money. "It only takes three minutes a day to recycle 70 percent of the trash."

Some other living museums found around the United States are the Tulsa Zoological Park in North Tulsa, Oklahoma, the living Desert State Park in Carlsbad, New Mexico, and the Ghost Ranch Living Museum in Española, New Mexico. It's museums like these that are working hard to preserve nature so future generations can walk on the wild side.

*Now answer the questions about the selection.*

1. What is the main goal of a living museum?
  - A. to provide people with a one-on-one experience with animals
  - B. to encourage children to touch and experience the many exhibits
  - C. to make people aware of how important plants and animals are to our survival
  - D. to provide a place where school children can go on field trips
  
2. How do living museums meet that goal?
  - A. They sell all kinds of nature books and posters.
  - B. They show nature films every day of the week.
  - C. They have special Saturday morning nature programs for children.
  - D. They provide people with a one-on-one experience with nature.
  
3. When you visit a planetarium, you will learn about
  - A. how to preserve our natural resources.
  - B. sunspots.
  - C. why plants are an important part of our ecological system.
  - D. how snakes move.
  
4. What is one thing people can do to help preserve our natural resources?
  - A. recycle trash
  - B. bring their friends to a living museum
  - C. go spelunking in a cave
  - D. encourage zoos to create habitats that are just right for their animals
  
5. Which of the following exhibits would **not** be found in a living museum?
  - A. a gorilla in a cage with cement floors
  - B. a “touch tank” with a variety of sea animals
  - C. a snake in its natural habitat
  - D. a planetarium

6. Designing an animal habitat takes a lot of hard detective work. Which of the following things would you do to create an animal’s habitat?
- A. grow plants that will make the animal’s exhibit look natural
  - B. observe the animal in its natural environment
  - C. visit zoos and living museums that exhibit the same animal
  - D. all of the above
7. According to this article, plants are important to the earth’s health because
- A. they shade animals.
  - B. animals eat plants.
  - C. they provide oxygen.
  - D. all of the above
8. The selection says that the Arabian oryx is an exotic desert animal. What does the word *exotic* mean? (page 3, paragraph 5)
- A. able to go without water
  - B. common and plain
  - C. rare, unusual, or foreign
  - D. able to eat cactus plants
9. The museum recreates the “legends, lore, and life of the high desert.” (page 3, paragraph 6) In this sentence, the word *recreates* means
- A. refreshes one’s mind or body through play in the high desert.
  - B. simulates the experiences and environment of the high desert.
  - C. happens or shows up again.
  - D. the quality or condition of being correct.
10. Another good title for this article is
- A. “The Life-Cycle of Bats.”
  - B. “Living Museums: Where Science Comes Alive.”
  - C. “Animals of the Desert.”
  - D. “A Walk Through Time.”

TOTAL SCORE: _____/10
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**STOP**

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

Passage #1

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.*

When most people speak about rain forests, 7  
 they refer to the lush, tropical regions in the jungles 17  
 near the equator. People seldom mention the dense, 25  
 temperate rain forests located along the Pacific coast. 33  
 This forest ranges from Alaska to Oregon. Here 41  
 warm, moist air from the Pacific Ocean drops up to 51  
 sixteen feet of rain in a single year. 59  
 Let us examine a few differences between 66  
 temperate and tropical rain forests. Both ecosystems 73  
 receive a great deal of rain. Tropical forests have rain 83  
 evenly spread throughout the year. Strong shower 90  
 bursts occur frequently. In contrast, temperate rain 97  
 forests have lengthy wet seasons and fairly dry 105  
 summers. Fog provides the necessary moisture for 112  
 plants during the summer. 116  
 A tropical rain forest has three layers: the forest 125  
 floor, the understory, and the canopy. It is home for 135  
 well over half of the earth’s plant and animal species. 145  
 The poor soil supports a wealth of vines, climbing 154  
 plants, and broad-leafed evergreens. The temperate 161  
 rain forest has a less complex ecology. Its cool 170  
 winters limit the numbers and variety of life forms 179  
 that survive there. The most common trees are 187  
 evergreens. 188  
 Tropical rain forests are more fragile than 195  
 temperate rain forests. However, both forests are 202  
 threatened. Once they are destroyed, it will take 210  
 years for these ecosystems to revive. 216

**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) = 150

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.*

The bison, native to North America, is also called a buffalo. The powerful male is twice the weight of the female. It measures over six feet tall at its shoulders and weighs nearly a ton. The bison’s shaggy, brown fur grows longest on the animal’s head, neck, and shoulders; a straggling beard hangs from its chin. Both male and female have short, curving horns. Despite their massive size, buffalo are agile runners, capable of sprinting up to thirty-five miles an hour.

Herds of buffalo were rapidly dying by the early 1800s. Once, the animals numbered over sixty million. People were pushing across the continent. The herds had to compete with the settlers. They were turning the animals’ grazing grounds into farmland. The westward expansion encroached upon the buffalo’s habitat. Building the railroad from the Atlantic to Pacific Ocean made the buffalo’s demise certain. Organized hunting parties killed this huge mammal for sport. People shot the animal from trains as they passed through its territory.

Some settlers were concerned. They thought the slaughter of the buffalo might also wipe out Native Americans. Bison were an important staple and their main source of protein. They used the hides for clothing, blankets, and shelter. In 1885, fewer than nine hundred buffalo remained on the plains. Cattlemen became alarmed. So people created refuges to save the animals. Today, herds number around 200,000. Hopefully, the buffalo will endure for future generations to enjoy.

EVALUATING CODES FOR ORAL READING	
skŷ	(/) 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)	= <u>150</u>

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

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# NOTES

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**First Edition**

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