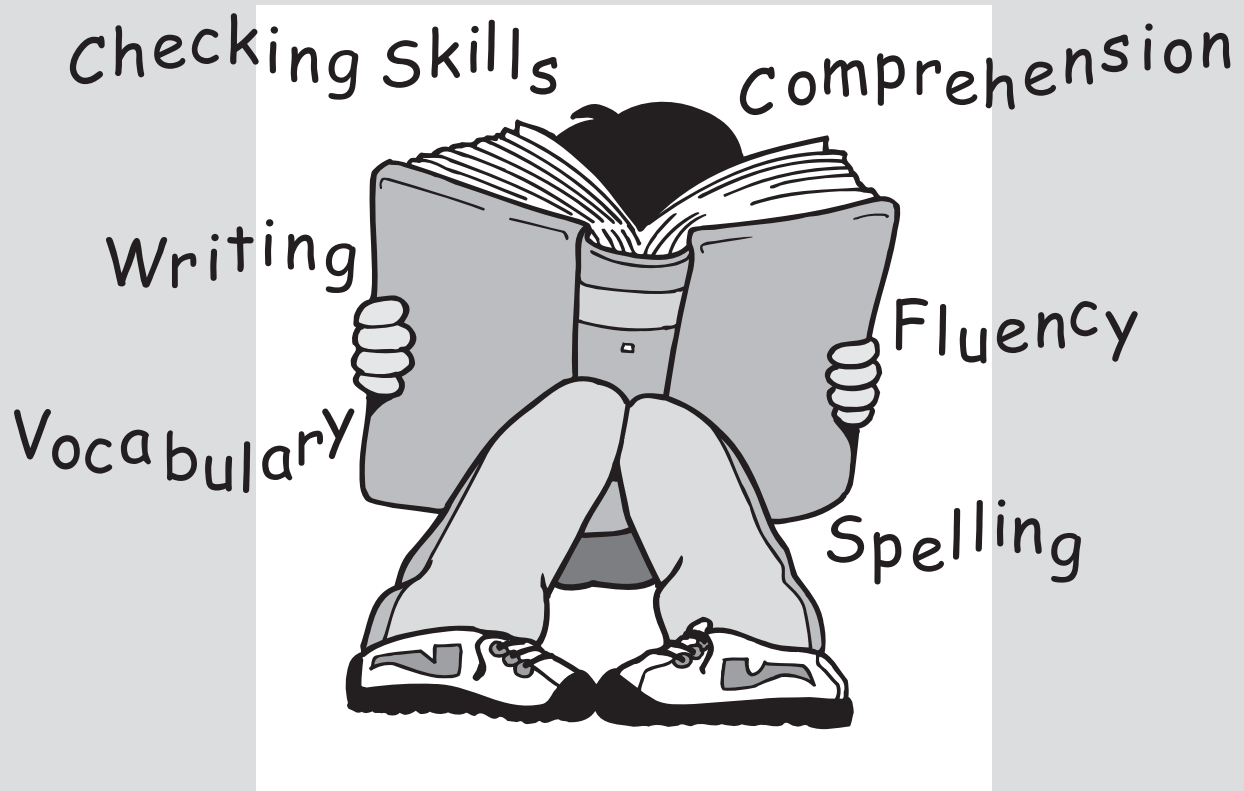


STUDENT TEST BOOKLET

6-8 Week Skills Assessments Developed for
Districts Using *Houghton Mifflin Reading*



GRADE 6 Theme 4

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 copaltree 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

TOTAL SCORE: _____/10

Read each sentence. Identify the adjectives in each sentence and write each adjective on the correct line under the sentence.

1. That chief wore an unusual mask.

Articles _____

Descriptive adjectives _____

Demonstrative adjectives _____

2. A messenger delivered these brilliant jewels.

Articles _____

Descriptive adjectives _____

Demonstrative adjectives _____

3. The metal shields protected those soldiers.

Articles _____

Descriptive adjectives _____

Demonstrative adjectives _____

Read each sentence. Fill in the blank with the correct form of the adjective in parentheses.

4. The Great Wall was the _____ defense against enemy invaders (good).
5. Manchu soldiers were a _____ threat than the Mongols. (bad)
6. Building the Great Wall was the _____ creation of the Ming Dynasty. (expensive)

Read each sentence and underline the adverbs.

7. Trade caravans arrived daily from distant cities in the empire.
8. Traders often brought very valuable jewels from the mines.

Read each sentence. Write the comparative or superlative form of the adverb in parentheses that correctly completes the sentence.

9. Caravans travel _____ through the desert than along rivers. (slowly)
10. Travelers thought the mountains were the _____ difficult part of the journey. (more)

TOTAL SCORE: _____/10

DIRECTIONS: Read all of the sentences. If an underlined word is misspelled, fill in the bubble next to the sentence. If none of the underlined words are misspelled, fill in the bubble next to “No mistake.”

1. A. When the admiral shouted orders, the sailors stood at attention.
 - B. Please draw two parallel lines on your graph paper.
 - C. Physicel therapists helped grandfather recover from his stroke.
 - D. No mistake
2. A. According to the offisial record, our basketball team was in second place.
 - B. Next week we will study glaciers in Alaska.
 - C. They decided not to pressure him to join their club.
 - D. No mistake
3. A. The photographer submitted his picture for the magazine’s next edition.
 - B. Use caution when stepping on those wet, mossy rocks.
 - C. Several cushions on our couch needed to be recovered.
 - D. No mistake
4. A. We will study reading during the first session of class each day.
 - B. The restaurant offered a combination of many different foods.
 - C. Road construcion equipment caused a traffic jam on the highway.
 - D. No mistake
5. A. Scrooge was a selfish, mean man.
 - B. Hikers found a challow place to cross the river.
 - C. Colonists established their settlement before the harsh winter weather arrived.
 - D. No mistake

6. A. England was a staunch ally of the United States during the war.
- B. The decent into the canyon took ten hours.
- C. The chef made a special chocolate dessert for his graduation party.
- D. No mistake
7. A. The operation was a success and I can go home in a few days.
- B. When confronted with a crisis, it is important to remain calm.
- C. She accepted a permanent job with the police department in her hometown.
- D. No mistake
8. A. Please get a visa, a document proving you have permission to enter the country.
- B. With its siren blaring, the ambulance sped toward the hospital.
- C. What time will your compuny arrive for dinner?
- D. No mistake
9. A. If we are going to have a profitable carnival, we will all have to cooperate.
- B. Always disconnect the lamp's power source when changing a light bulb.
- C. Our store owner hoped the advertisement would attract new customers.
- D. No mistake
10. A. The log cabin was situated on a hill overlooking the valley.
- B. We hoped to explore the cave tomorrow morning.
- C. News reporters encouraged people to contribute to the charitable event.
- D. No mistake

TOTAL SCORE: _____/10

PART 1 — Antonyms

DIRECTIONS: Read the sentence. Choose the word that means the **opposite** of the underlined word. Then fill in the bubble next to the word you have chosen.

1. Wilma Rudolf conquered a childhood disease and won three gold medals in the 1960 Olympics.
 - A. bartered
 - B. adorned
 - C. surrendered
 - D. defeated

2. The intricate design of her gown included a fine lace collar and a beaded bodice.
 - A. terrain
 - B. extravagant
 - C. uncomplicated
 - D. primary

3. Houses with durable stone walls were still standing after the hurricane.
 - A. sturdy
 - B. fragile
 - C. empire
 - D. ingenious

PART 2 — Multiple Meanings

DIRECTIONS: Read the sentence. Read and answer the question. Fill in the bubble next to the answer you have chosen.

4. The young boy herded cattle into the village compound.

In which sentence is the word compound used **in the same way** as in the sentence above?

 - A. The teacher explained that flies have compound eyes.
 - B. Unfortunately, the horse’s broken leg was a compound fracture.
 - C. *Barnyard* is a compound word.
 - D. The dog guarding the compound barked fiercely.

5. The king was eager to expand his domain beyond its present borders.

In which sentence is the word domain used **in the same way** as in the sentence above?

 - A. In college I plan to take courses in the domain of history so I can be a history teacher.
 - B. National parks and forests are part of the public domain.
 - C. Do you know the domain name of the website for finding information?
 - D. The Mongolian domain, the largest empire in history, once covered all of Asia.

PART 3 — Context Meaning

DIRECTIONS: Read the sentence. Using context, choose the word that means the **same**, or **about the same**, as the underlined word. Then fill in the bubble next to the word you have chosen.

6. After six grueling weeks of hard labor, the workers were given a vacation.
- A. exhausting
- B. nomadic
- C. excluding
- D. massive
7. There were twenty drivers vying for ten starting positions in Saturday's race.
- A. flourishing
- B. competing
- C. imposing
- D. grieving

PART 4 — Synonyms

DIRECTIONS: Read the sentence. Choose the word that means the **same**, or **about the same**, as the underlined word. Then fill in the bubble next to the word you have chosen.

8. The signing of the Declaration of Independence was a momentous event in our country's history.
- A. metropolis
- B. significant
- C. dynasty
- D. unity
9. There must be a well-known restaurant in the vicinity of our hotel.
- A. entourage
- B. oasis
- C. causeway
- D. region
10. Tributes for the new prince were placed at the gate of the palace.
- A. gifts
- B. tunics
- C. craftsmen
- D. caravans

TOTAL SCORE: _____/10

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.

10
20
28
37
44
46

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.

54
62
72
83
91
100
106

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.

114
123
132
139
149
158
166

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.

177
185
193
201
212
221
228
230

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.

Expository Writing Prompt - Response to Literature

Writing Situation: You have read Lost Temple of the Aztecs. You are thinking about the Aztec leader, Moctezuma, and the Spanish leader, Cortes.

Purpose: To inform

Audience: Your teacher

Writing Directions: Consider the similarities and differences between Moctezuma and Cortes. Write an essay that compares and contrasts the two leaders. Use a Venn diagram to organize your ideas. Refer to your anthology to write this essay.

Student Checklist:

Revising

- ___ Did you clearly state whom you are comparing and contrasting?
- ___ Did you identify likenesses and differences between the characters?
- ___ Did you use vivid details to make your comparisons and contrasts clear?
- ___ Does your essay have a conclusion?

Proofreading

- ___ Did you write in well-organized paragraphs?
- ___ Did you use a variety of sentence structures with proper subject-verb agreement?
- ___ Did you use correct grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

Conventions Score: _____/4	TOTAL RUBRIC SCORE: _____/4
Genre Score: _____/4	
Writing Traits Score: _____/4	

NOTES

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Sixth Edition

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