

Wonder Stories

READING LEVEL 4

REM 469

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A TEACHING RESOURCE FROM



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INTRODUCTION

Wonder Stories is a series of books designed to improve the reading comprehension of older students whose reading skills are below grade level. The series is also ideal for challenging the abilities of younger students functioning at or above grade level.

Each factual article begins with a question about a topic that has prompted thoughts like, "I wonder how, I wonder why, I wonder what. . ." Comprehension questions following each story address the following skills: main idea, finding a fact, locating an answer, inference, vocabulary, and word analysis.

The high-interest stories appeal to all ages, making it possible to tailor the appropriate book for individual students depending upon their reading abilities. In order to ensure that stories were at the desired reading levels, readability scales were used.*

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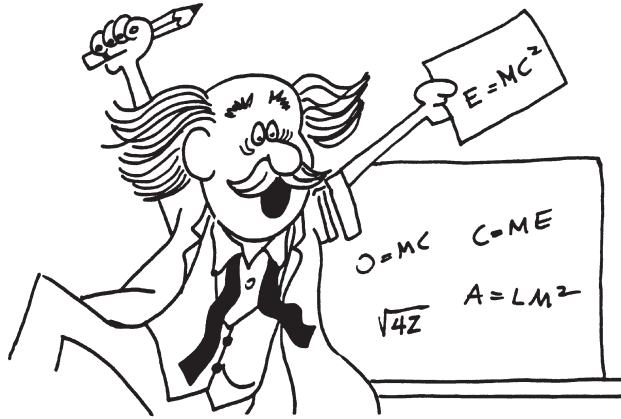
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A Note About Readability Scores

Readability scales are useful as long as one realizes their limitations. Results are approximate guidelines only, with a minimum margin of error of (+ or -) a grade level. In other words, a story measured at a second grade readability level could easily be suitable for both first and third graders. Another limitation is that two different readability scales can be applied to the same sample, yet yield widely varied results. In spite of the inexact nature of readability scales, we at Remedia use them because they measure word and sentence length, both valid predictors of readability. They also help us provide vocabulary-controlled materials in order to meet the special education needs of many of our valued clients. At the same time, we realize that these scales are not designed to measure every other factor affecting readability, such as sentence structure or appeal to the reader. We are also aware of the variance in standards and expectations set for each grade level. What is first grade material in one school may be second grade in another. At Remedia we strive to take all these factors into consideration as we develop and revise materials. We leave the rest in your capable hands. Regarding readability, you—and your students—will be the final judge.

Name _____

What is a genius?



A person may be bright and talented. We might say that person is a genius. That means he or she has knowledge far beyond the average human being.

It is hard to say how someone gets this kind of knowledge. Some people seem to be born with a strong ability to quickly grasp facts. Others don't show this trait until they are teens or even adults.

Albert Einstein is said to be one of the smartest men who ever lived. Yet he didn't speak until he was two years old. His parents worried that something was wrong with him. As a schoolboy, he did not earn good grades. As an adult, he wrote many ideas, called theories, about science. Some of his thoughts are so deep that only a few people can truly understand them.

Wolfgang Mozart is also said to have been a genius. At the age of three, he showed amazing musical talent. He began composing music when he was five years old. Although he was thought of as a genius, he died a poor man.

A genius may need special training. For example, he or she might be smart in school but not have good manners. Perhaps the most important thing is to be a "well-rounded" person.

1. This story is about _____.

2. Who were two geniuses?

3. Which paragraph talks about someone with special musical talent? _____

4. What do you think "well-rounded" means? _____

5. What word in paragraph 3 means "ideas about science"? _____

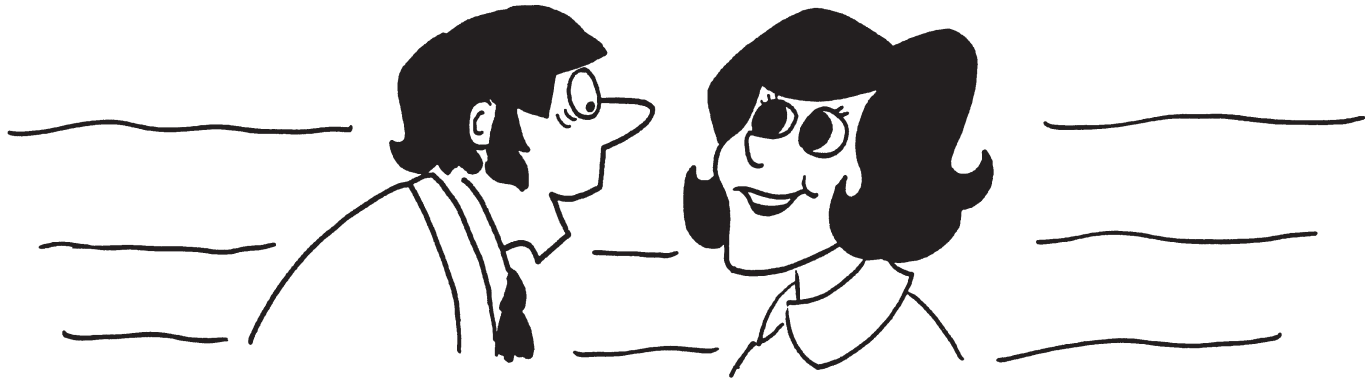
6. Write other forms of these words that are used in the story.

know: _____

smart: _____

Name _____

Why do you sleep?



Your eye itself doesn't change in size, but a part of your eye can grow larger or smaller. That part is the pupil, which is the black circle inside your eye.

The pupil stretches because it has muscles all around it. The muscles act like a piece of elastic and can shrink or grow.

The pupils allow light to enter your eyes. A balance of just the right amount of light is needed. In a brightly lit room, your eyes don't need to take in as much light, so your pupils will shrink.

In darkness, your pupils will open very wide. They try to let in as much light as possible so that you can find your way.

Perhaps you are in the dark, and someone suddenly turns on a light. You may not be able to open your eyes at first, because your pupils are too large for all the light. They will have to shrink. In this way, your eyes are protected and are able to serve you in all kinds of light.

1. This story is about the part of your eye called the _____.

2. What is the purpose of the pupil? _____

3. Write one of the sentences in paragraph 4 that tells what your pupils do in the dark.

4. What do you think you should do to protect your eyes in bright sun or snow?

5. What is a word that means "a piece of rubber that stretches"? _____

6. Write a homonym from the story for each of these words.

write: _____

peace: _____

Name _____

Where is the biggest home in the world?



A typical home in the United States has five to seven rooms. In the land called Tibet, there is a home that has 500 rooms. This building is called the “palace of the gods.”

This very large place is the home of about 1,000 monks. Monks are men who follow a certain religion. Their home has 1,400 windows which gives them great mountain views. Their home rests on a mountain that is about 12,000 feet above sea level.

This huge palace is not the world’s biggest home. The Vatican in Rome is the largest palace still used as a home. The pope, a religious leader, lives there. His home has 1,400 rooms.

However, the world’s largest palace is in China. The Imperial Palace was once the home of Chinese kings, but now it is used by the government. This building is more than one-half mile long and has 17 more buildings inside it. It is protected by a giant body of water called a moat. The moat surrounds the palace and is as wide as a football field. Some people call this building “The Forbidden City.”

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1. This story is about _____.
 2. What three lands contain the biggest homes? _____

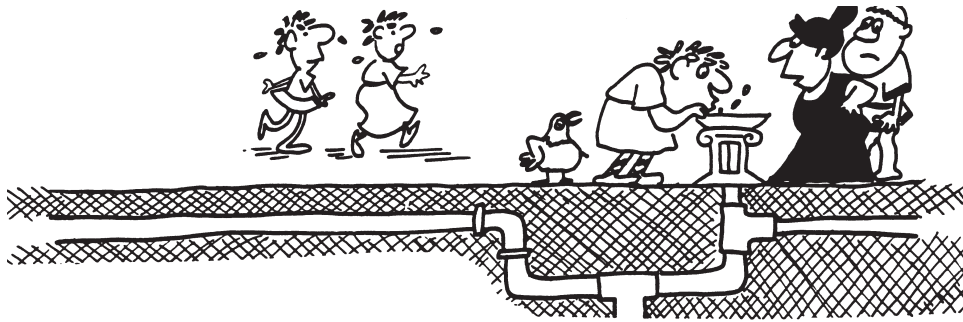
 3. Which paragraph tells about the Imperial Palace? _____
 4. Why do you think the world’s largest palace is called “The Forbidden City”?

 5. What is a word in paragraph 1 that means “average; like most others”?

 6. Write other forms of these words that are used in the story.
China: _____
religion: _____

Name _____

Where did ancient people get water?



We get fresh water from faucets in our homes. Long ago, people had to find ways to bring enough water from rivers to their towns.

In Rome, underground pipes brought water from the mountains. The pipes were called aqueducts. This water was meant for parks and baths, wealthy rich people found ways to connect the pipes to their homes.

Canals also brought water where it was needed. Canals caused water to leave nearby streams and flow past crops and huts. Some ancient Indian tribes dug holes about six feet deep and 25 feet across. These holes couldn't force the water upstream. They worked very well, however, for their simple needs.

It took 800 years to build the Grand Canal in China. Up to five million people a day worked on it. The finished canal linked three rivers and crossed 1,100 miles of China. It has been repaired and is still used for a source of fresh water.

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1. This story is about how ancient people _____ .
 2. How big is the Grand Canal in China? _____
 3. Write the sentence in paragraph two that tells what underground pipes in Rome were called. _____

 4. What kinds of tools do you think ancient Indian tribes used to dig canals?

 5. What is a word in paragraph four that means "a place from which something comes"?

 6. Write the past tense of each of these verbs.
bring: _____
find: _____