



TeacherVision® Books

# Reading Comprehension Stories

Grade 3



## Volume I

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# Contents

Big, Bigger, Biggest .....	2
Climbing High .....	5
Secrets in the Wings .....	8
The First Cartoons .....	11
Harp Medicine .....	14
Signals on the Sea.....	17
Your Time Machine .....	20
For the Love of Patty Cake.....	23
Fish for Pets.....	26
Rockets.....	29
The Snowshoe Rabbit Changes Its Fur.....	32
Before the Dinosaurs .....	35



## Big, Bigger, Biggest

If you have seen an elephant, you know that elephants are very big. Elephants are the largest animals that live on land. Do you know what animal is bigger than an elephant? Yes, whales are the biggest animals living on Earth.

Shamu, the famous killer whale, is a big animal. Killer whales are 15 to 20 feet long. They make the people around them look small, but killer whales are small. Yes, they are among the smaller whales.

Humpback whales are bigger than killer whales. They grow to 35 to 50 feet. If six tall men swam in a close line, they might be as long as a humpback whale.

The biggest whale is the blue whale. Blue whales are about 100 feet long. They are the biggest animals on Earth. One blue whale is about as big as ten elephants.

People study whales. These people count whales, measure whales, and learn what whales eat and where whales live. Maybe some day you will study whales, too.



## Big, Bigger, Biggest

1. What is the name of the famous killer whale?

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2. How big are killer whales?

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3. How big are humpback whales?

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4. What is the name of the whale that grows to 100 feet?

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5. What is the first whale named in the story?

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6. What is the last whale named in the story?

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7. Would you like to study whales? Why do you feel this way?

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8. The story tells us that people study whales. What reason might people have for studying whales?

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## Big, Bigger, Biggest

9. Humpback whales may become extinct. This means that there would be no humpback whales alive on Earth. How would studying these whales save them? Do you think people will save the humpback whales?

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10. Why do you think whales grow to be so much bigger than any animal living on the land?

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11. What would be a good name for this story? Use as few words as possible.

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12. How are a blue whale and a killer whale alike? How are they different?

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13. In your own words, tell what you learned about killer whales, humpback whales, and blue whales.

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14. If people do not take care of the whales, many will die. If all the blue whales die, they will become extinct. What would happen if the blue whales became extinct? Do you think our world would change? If you said yes, how would it change? If you said no, why would it not change?

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15. People do not know what lives in the deepest parts of the ocean. We do not have the special machines that could take us to the bottom of the sea. The story says, "Blue whales are the largest animals on Earth." Is this a fact or an opinion? Why do you think so?

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## Climbing High

Annie S. Peck was born in 1850. When Annie was a little girl, she enjoyed playing sports; however, her brothers didn't like to play with her.

"Girls can't play sports," they would say. "Go play with your dolls!"

Annie knew she was as good as the boys. She ran as fast. She learned as fast. Most of all, she climbed better than anyone she knew.

When Annie grew up, she found that people thought women were not as good as men. Annie decided to show the world what wonderful things women could do. First, she graduated from college. Very few women went to college then.

Next, Annie began to climb mountains. One day, Annie climbed Mount Huascarán in Peru. She was the first person to climb such a high mountain in the Americas. Peru later named part of the mountain after her.

Annie went on to climb many mountains. At the age of 82, Annie climbed Mount Madison. Annie Peck died in 1935.



## Climbing High

1. Who is the main character of the story?

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2. In what year was Annie S. Peck born?

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3. What did Annie's brothers tell her when she wanted to play sports with them?

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4. What was the name of the mountain in Peru that Annie climbed?

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5. What was the first thing Annie did to show what wonderful things women could do?

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6. What did she do next?

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7. What one word would best describe Annie Peck?

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8. How did Annie Peck feel about herself?

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## Climbing High

9. Do you think women will continue to try to do as well as men in the future? Why do you think so?

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10. What happened to Annie to make her want to do such amazing things?

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11. Write a title for this story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. Sally Ride was the first American woman to fly into space. She rode in the space shuttle. How are Sally Ride and Annie Peck alike? How are they different?

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13. In your own words, tell about the special things Annie Peck did.

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14. Annie Peck was the first person to climb Mount Huascarán. She climbed many other mountains, too. She continued to climb at the age of 82. How might men think differently about women when they hear what Annie did?

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15. The story said, "Annie Peck was the first person to climb Mount Huascarán." Is this statement a fact or an opinion? How can you prove your answer?

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## Secrets in the Wings

In 1914, Germany and France went to war. A few years before the war, the French army saw many Germans walking around France with butterfly nets.

The Germans said that they studied butterflies. They drew pictures of the wings of the butterflies. The Germans then sent the pictures back to Germany for closer study.

“Why are the Germans studying France’s butterflies?” the French army asked.

The French took some of the pictures away from the Germans. The French army looked closely at each picture. There was something strange about the patterns on the wings. They were really tiny maps. The maps showed where to find France’s forts, bridges, and roads. The maps even showed the number of France’s guns.



## Secrets in the Wings

1. What happened to France and Germany in 1914?

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2. What were the Germans collecting?

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3. Where did the Germans send their butterfly pictures?

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4. What did the French army find on the pictures of butterfly wings?

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5. Which happened first—the war between Germany and France, or the drawing of the butterfly wing maps?

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6. What was the first thing the French army did to learn what the Germans were doing?

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7. What one word would describe the Germans who invented the butterfly wing maps?

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8. Why didn't the Germans make regular maps instead of hiding the maps in pictures of butterflies?

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## Secrets in the Wings

9. What might have happened if the French army had not discovered the butterfly wing maps?

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10. Why did Germany want the butterfly wing maps?

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11. Write a title for this story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. Look at a picture of a butterfly wing. Look at a road map. How are the designs on butterfly wings like the designs on maps? How are they different?

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13. In your own words, tell how the Germans secretly made maps of France.

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14. At the time of the story, France thought Germany was a friendly nation. How did France's feelings about Germany change after they found the maps on butterfly wings?

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15. The French army looked at the pictures of the butterfly wings. The story said, "There was something strange about the patterns on the wings. They were really tiny maps."

Is this a fact or an opinion? Why do you think so?

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## The First Cartoons

Today we see cartoons about super people and talking animals. We never stop and think about the first cartoon.

Émile Cohl of France made the first cartoon in 1908. He called his five minute movie *Drama Among the Puppets*. The puppets looked like drawings made by little children. The lines were white on a black background. There was no sound to make the puppets talk. An American, Winsor McCay, made the second cartoon in 1909. The cartoon was *Gertie the Dinosaur*. Gertie was a simple drawing. In this cartoon, there were background pictures. Gertie walked in a make-believe dinosaur world. Still, there was no sound. Mr. McCay drew 10,000 pictures to make Gertie come to life.

Today you might run home from school to see cartoons. If you do, stop and think about Gertie. Maybe you will someday see the dinosaur who started it all.



## The First Cartoons

1. Who made the first cartoon?

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2. In what year was the cartoon Drama Among the Puppets made?

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3. In what year was the cartoon Gertie the Dinosaur made?

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4. Who was the main character of the second cartoon?

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5. In what country was the first cartoon made, France or America?

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6. Which cartoon was made first, Gertie the Dinosaur or Drama Among the Puppets?

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7. Do you think Gertie the Dinosaur was a better cartoon than Drama Among the Puppets? Why do you think so?

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8. The story tells us that the drawings for the first cartoon were very simple. Why do you think Émile Cohl started with simple pictures?

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## The First Cartoons

9. The story tells us that the second cartoon improved the art of cartoon making. Do you think that the cartoons of tomorrow will be better than those of today? In what ways do you think they will be better?

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10. Why do you think cartoon makers continue to try to improve their art?

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11. Write a title for the story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. How are the two cartoons, Drama Among the Puppets and Gertie the Dinosaur, alike? How are they different?

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13. In your own words, tell what you learned about the cartoon Drama Among the Puppets.

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14. When Cohl and McCay made the first cartoons, people did not know how to put sound into movies. How do you think cartoons changed when sound was added? Did this make the cartoons better? Why do you think so?

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15. Which cartoon is better, Drama Among the Puppets or Gertie the Dinosaur? Is your answer a fact or an opinion? Why do you think so?

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## Harp Medicine

Harp playing is a very old art. Long ago, people said harp players could make the sick feel well again.

One story tells about a man who was very sick. This was long before doctors had good medicines. He was so sick no one thought he would get better.

A harp player heard about the man, and went to his house. All night, the harp player sat by the man's bed. The music he played was soft and beautiful. The music of the harp put the man into a deep sleep.

In the morning, the man's family came to his room. To their surprise, the man was much better.

"The music of the harp has saved me," the man said.

Today, we know that music does help people feel better. People who follow their doctor's directions, and listen to soft music, feel better faster.



## Harp Medicine

1. Long ago, what did people say harp players could do?

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2. What did the harp player do for the sick man?

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3. What did the sick man do as he listened to the harp music?

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4. How did the sick man feel in the morning?

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5. What happened first in the story—the sick man felt better, or the harp player played music for the man?

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6. What happened last in the story: The man said, “The music of the harp has saved me,” or the harp player went to the sick man’s house?

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7. Why do you think the man felt better in the morning?

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8. The story tells us that people who follow their doctor’s directions, and listen to soft music, feel better faster. Why should people follow their doctor’s directions first?

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## Harp Medicine

9. After reading this story, what could hospitals in the future do to help sick people feel better faster?

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10. The harp player stayed with the man and played for him all night. Why do you think he did that?

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11. Write a title for the story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. Think about a time you did not feel well. Do you think you would have felt better listening to soft music, or listening to nothing at all? Why do you think so?

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13. In your own words, tell how the harp player helped the sick man feel better.

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14. Many restaurants, stores, and doctors' offices play soft music for their customers. They are trying to change the way people feel or act. After reading this story, how might soft music change the way people feel or act in a store?

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15. The sick man in the story said, "The music of the harp has saved me." Is this a fact or his opinion? Why do you think so?

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## Signals on the Sea

Your ship rocks softly on the calm ocean. Far off in the distance your captain sees another boat.

“Change course!” he cries. “There’s an emergency on the boat ahead!”

How did your captain know the other boat was in trouble? He simply looked at the boat and knew they needed help.

Your captain saw a special flag. Ships talk to each other, using flags of all shapes and colors. Some flags stand for letters used by everyone no matter what language they speak. Other flags represent numbers. There are even flags that send special messages.

Your captain saw a triangle flag with red and white squares. It told the captain there was an emergency on board.

Some flags identify warships. In boat racing, flags tell everyone the number of minutes left before the race begins. The flags also tell what kinds of boats are in the race.

Make a set of signal flags. Can you send messages to your friend?



## Signals on the Sea

1. What did the captain see that told him there was an emergency on the other boat?

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2. Name two things a ship's flag might stand for.

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3. What does the emergency flag look like?

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4. What do flags tell people in boat races?

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5. What did your captain say after he saw another ship?

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6. What do flags tell boat racers before the race begins?

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7. Why do you think sailors made flag signals everyone could read?

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8. Where are "you" when the story begins?

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## Signals on the Sea

9. Do you think sailors will use signal flags in the future, or will some other technology take their place?
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- \_\_\_\_\_
10. Why did the captain in the story change course?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
11. Write a title for the story. Use as few words as possible.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
12. Read the story "Tramp's Code" (Reading Level 2, p. 193). How are the flag signals and the tramp's code alike? How are they different?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
13. In your own words, tell how sailors use signal flags.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
14. Imagine that every country had its own flag code. The United States could not read Japan's signals. Germany could not read Mexico's signals. Would this be a better system or would it be worse? Why do you think so?
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- \_\_\_\_\_
15. The story said, "Ships talk to each other using flags of all shapes and colors." Is this statement a fact or an opinion? How can you prove your answer?
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## Your Time Machine

Would you like to travel back in time and see what the stars looked like 84 to 650 years ago? You don't need a time machine. Just go outside any clear night and look up.

The light from the stars takes many years to reach Earth. Imagine this: I gave Sam a letter in Dallas, Texas. I told him to walk to New York City, and give the letter to a man there. If it takes Sam one year to walk to New York City, we can say New York is one walking year from Dallas, Texas. The man in New York will read a letter I wrote one year ago.

The light given off by the star Vega today takes 27 years to reach Earth. Vega is 27 light years away from Earth. If you look at Vega tonight, you are seeing what it looked like 27 years ago.

Try to find one of these stars tonight, then check the list. The light years tell you how long ago the star gave off the light you see tonight.

<i>Star</i>	<i>In the constellation –</i>	<i>Light years away</i>
<i>Vega</i>	<i>Lyra</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Pollux</i>	<i>Twins</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Rigel</i>	<i>Orion</i>	<i>650</i>
<i>Sirius</i>	<i>Large Dog</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Regulus</i>	<i>Lion</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Deneb</i>	<i>Swan</i>	<i>54</i>

**Note:** Light travels 6,000,000,000,000 miles a year. One light year = 6,000,000,000,000 miles.



## Your Time Machine

1. Where can you look to see back in time?

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2. How many light years away from Earth is the star Vega?

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3. When you look at the star Vega, how old is the light you are seeing?

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4. In what constellation can you find the star Vega?

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5. If the stars Sirius, Regulus, and Rigel all gave off their first light today, which star would be seen from Earth first?

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6. If the stars Vega, Pollux, and Deneb all gave off their first light today, which star would appear in the Earth's sky last?

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7. Imagine looking at the star Rigel from Earth. Suddenly, the star explodes. If you saw Rigel explode tonight, how many years ago did Rigel really explode?

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8. If we were in a spaceship near the star Rigel, would the star Vega still be 27 light years away? Why do you think so?

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## Your Time Machine

9. Do you think people will travel to the stars? If you said yes, of the stars in the story, which one might people visit first? Why?

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10. Astronomers study the stars. Would you like to be an astronomer? Why?

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11. Write a title for this story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. How are the stars Deneb and Sirius alike? How are they different?

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13. In your own words, tell what a light year is.

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14. After reading this story, will you look at the stars differently from the way you did before? Why do you think so?

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15. The story says, "The light given off by the star Vega today takes 27 years to reach Earth." Is this a fact or an opinion? How can you prove your answer?

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## For the Love of Patty Cake

In 1972, a baby gorilla named Patty Cake was born at New York's Central Park Zoo. Patty Cake's parents, Lulu and Kongo, loved their baby very much. They hugged Patty Cake and played with her.

The Central Park Zoo was very old. It had old box cages with heavy bars. One day while playing with Lulu, Patty Cake broke her arm on the bars.

The arm was put in a cast. The zoo keeper called the newer Bronx Zoo. He asked them to keep Patty Cake until her arm was better. Lulu or Kongo might take off the cast, and hurt Patty Cake's arm again.

Patty Cake got better fast. When it was time to go home, the Bronx Zoo wanted to keep her. They said the old cage was dangerous.

The Central Park Zoo asked Ronald D. Nadler, who studied gorillas, for help. He told the Bronx Zoo that Patty Cake needed her family. He told the Central Park Zoo to make safer cages.

After three months, Patty Cake went home to Lulu and Kongo. The family was happy to be together at last.





## For the Love of Patty Cake

1. What is the name of the baby gorilla?

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2. Where was Patty Cake born?

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3. How did Patty Cake break her arm?

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4. What did Richard D. Nadler tell the zoos to do to solve the problem?

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5. What happened to Patty Cake before she was sent to the Bronx Zoo?

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6. What did Ronald D. Nadler tell the Central Park Zoo to do before Patty Cake could go home?

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7. What do you think might have happened to Patty Cake if the Central Park Zoo had not called Mr. Nadler for help?

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8. The story says that the Central Park Zoo called Ronald D. Nadler for help. What does this tell you about Mr. Nadler's knowledge of gorillas?

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## For the Love of Patty Cake

9. Based on what the Central Park Zoo learned about their cages, what do you suppose will happen to cages used in other old zoos?

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10. You read that the Central Park Zoo wanted the Bronx Zoo to return Patty Cake. One reason was to keep Patty Cake's family together. What other reason might they have?

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11. Write a name for this story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. Patty Cake moved to the Bronx Zoo until her arm was better. How was living at the Bronx Zoo like living at the Central Park Zoo? How was it different?

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13. In your own words, tell why the Bronx Zoo thought Patty Cake should not go back to the Central Park Zoo.

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14. How did Patty Cake's problem change the lives of the gorillas at the Central Park Zoo?

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15. The story says, "He (Mr. Nadler) told the Bronx Zoo that Patty Cake needed her family." Is this a fact or Mr. Nadler's opinion? Why do you think so?

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## Fish for Pets

Would you like to keep fish as pets? There are many beautiful fish you can raise at home.

Neon tetras grow to about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long. Their bright colors of blue, green, red, and silver stripes seem to glow. Neon tetras are fast, active swimmers.

Zebra fish are also small, fast-moving fish. They grow about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches long, and have dark stripes running from head to fin. Their markings remind you of zebras.

Guppies or rainbow fish can easily become your parents' worst nightmare. Their families grow by 30 to 60 babies every month. Guppies are about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches long. Male guppies come in many colors and patterns. The females are larger, with little color.

The black, or midnight molly, is a large, elegant fish 2 to 4 inches long. The entire body is jet black. The males have a tip of orange along the top fin.

Pet stores have many other types of fish you can raise at home. Maybe you can start a collection of your own.



## Fish for Pets

1. Name three kinds of fish described in the story.

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2. What do neon tetras look like?

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3. How many babies do guppies have every month?

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4. How long is a black molly?

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5. What is the first type of fish described in the story?

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6. What is the third type of fish described in the story?

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7. Why does the story say, "Guppies can easily become your parents' worst nightmare?"

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8. Why do you think people named the one type of fish a zebra fish?

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## Fish for Pets

9. Will fish become more or less popular as pets? Why do you think so?

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10. Why might someone want fish for pets?

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11. Write a title for the story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. How are neon tetras and zebra fish alike? How are they different?

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13. Tell about the four kinds of fish in the story in your own words.

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14. What would happen if you bought two guppies and had 62 guppies by the end of the month?

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15. The story said, "There are many beautiful fish you can raise at home." Is this a fact or an opinion? How can you prove your answer?

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## Rockets

We think of rockets as a new idea. How long have people used rockets? Can you guess?

Men made rockets hundreds of years ago. No one knows who made the first rocket.

A Greek man named Hero made a rocket about 2,000 years ago. His rocket engine used the power of steam.

In 1232, people in China made a rocket with black gunpowder. They called it “an arrow of flying fire.”

People used the rocket in many different ways. In the 1200s, a Chinese man made a rocket-powered ski-chair. An Arab made the first torpedo using rockets at about the same time. By 1420, a man in Italy made a car using rocket power.

So you see, rockets are very old. People use rockets in many different ways. Can you think of a new way to use rockets?



# Rockets

1. Who made the first rocket?

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2. What did Hero use to power his rocket?

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3. What did the Chinese call their rocket?

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4. Name two ways people have used rockets.

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5. Where did the first person known to make a rocket live, Greece or China?

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6. Which was invented first: rockets made with black gunpowder, or a car using rocket power?

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7. Hero made his rocket engine over 2,000 years ago, using steam. Gunpowder was not used until A.D. 1232. Give a reason why gunpowder might not have been used earlier.

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8. The story tells us that no one knows who made the first rocket. What reason can you give for this?

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# Rockets

9. What new ways might people use rockets in the future?

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10. People make new things because there is a need for them. What reasons might the Chinese have had for making their rockets?

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11. Write a title for the story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. How are a rocket-powered ski-chair and a rocket-powered car alike? How are they different?

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13. In your own words, tell about two different fuels used to power rockets.

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14. How has the use of rockets changed our lives?

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15. The story says, "People use rockets in many different ways." Is this a fact or an opinion? Why do you think so?

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## The Snowshoe Rabbit Changes Its Fur

What color clothes would you wear to play hide-and-peek in a grass field? Green clothes would hide you in the grass. Your friends would easily see you if you wore black clothes.

The snowshoe rabbit needs to hide from other animals that eat it. The snowshoe rabbit lives in places that are very cold and snowy in the winter, however. In the summer, the snow melts to show the dark brown dirt. How can the snowshoe rabbit hide? It changes its clothes.

The snowshoe rabbit's fur is brown in the summer. It lies still on the dirt so other animals can't see it. In the fall, the first snows come. The snowshoe rabbit changes its clothes to hide in the brown dirt and snow. Now its fur is white with brown spots.

What do you think happens to the snowshoe rabbit's fur in the winter? It turns a beautiful, pure white. Sitting still in the white snow, the snowshoe rabbit can't be seen by other animals.



## The Snowshoe Rabbit Changes Its Fur

1. What does a snowshoe rabbit need to hide from?

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2. Where do snowshoe rabbits live?

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3. What color is the snowshoe rabbit's fur in the summer?

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4. What color is the snowshoe rabbit's fur in the winter?

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5. What color fur does the story describe first?

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6. What color fur does the story describe last?

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7. What one word best describes the snowshoe rabbit?

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8. What might happen to a brown rabbit hiding in the snow?

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## The Snowshoe Rabbit Changes Its Fur

9. What color is the snowshoe rabbit's fur in the spring? Why do you think so?

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10. What happens to the weather that tells the snowshoe rabbit's fur to turn white?

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11. Write a title for the story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. John has a pet white rabbit. It lives in a cage in his yard. The rabbit eats carrots, lettuce, and rabbit food. John likes to play with his rabbit.

How are John's pet rabbit and a snowshoe rabbit alike? How are they different?

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13. In your own words, tell why the snowshoe rabbit changes its fur.

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14. How do the changing colors of the snowshoe rabbit's fur affect the hunting animals? They depend on eating rabbits for food.

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15. The story says, "Green clothes would hide you in the grass." Is this a fact or an opinion? How can you prove your answer?

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## Before the Dinosaurs

What killed the dinosaurs? You have heard this question before. Something happened to Earth that changed it. Earth changed so much that the dinosaurs could not live on the planet anymore. Did you know that this was not the first time Earth changed?

Long before the time of the dinosaurs, different animals lived on Earth. Many of the animals were like snails and clams. Suddenly, most of these animals died. What killed them?

Earth changed so much that they could not live. Some people think that a volcano made Earth change. About 96 sea animals out of every 100 died. Most of the land animals died, too. The volcano killed these animals 248 million years ago. This large die-off of animals made room for the dinosaurs.



## Before the Dinosaurs

1. Why did the dinosaurs die?

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2. How many sea animals died from the volcano?

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3. How many years ago did the volcano kill the animals?

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4. What did this large die-off do for the dinosaurs?

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5. What type of animals lived on Earth before the volcano erupted?

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6. What happened after the volcano erupted?

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7. Do you think dinosaurs would have lived if the volcano had not killed so many animals? Why do you think so?

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8. The story tells us that a volcano changed Earth. How could a volcano do this?

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## Before the Dinosaurs

9. The story tells us that Earth changed twice. Earth changed so much that many animals could not live anymore. Do you think such a change could happen again? Why do you think so?

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10. Why do people want to learn about these changes in the earth? Is this important for us to know? Why do you think so?

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11. Write a title for this story. Use as few words as possible.

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12. How are the animals like snails and clams in the story also like the dinosaurs? How are they different?

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13. In your own words, tell what happened to the animals that died before the time of the dinosaurs.

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14. What do you think happened to the plants on Earth when the volcano erupted?

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15. The story says, "Some people think that a volcano made Earth change." Is this a fact or an opinion? Why do you think so?

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16.

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