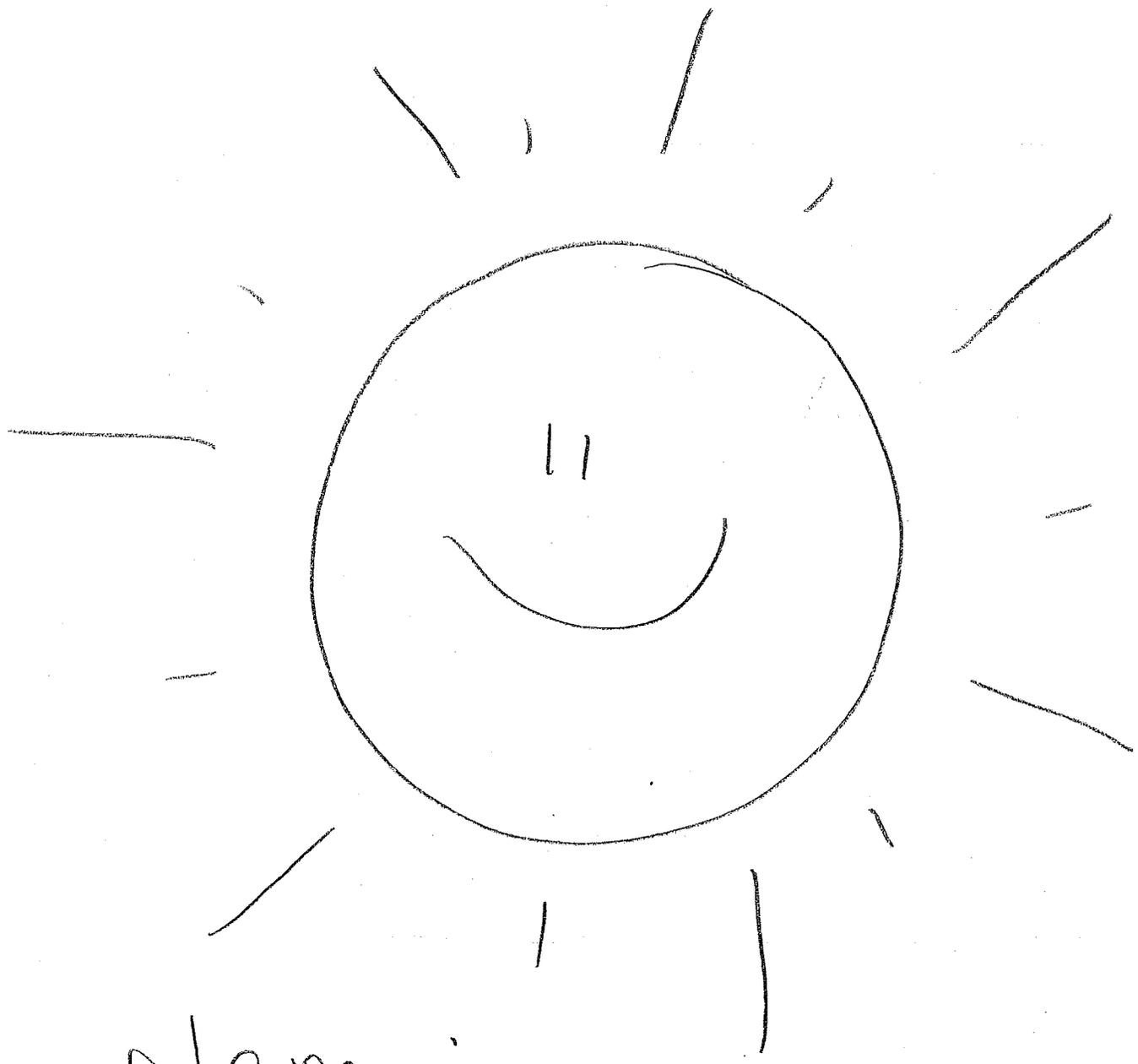
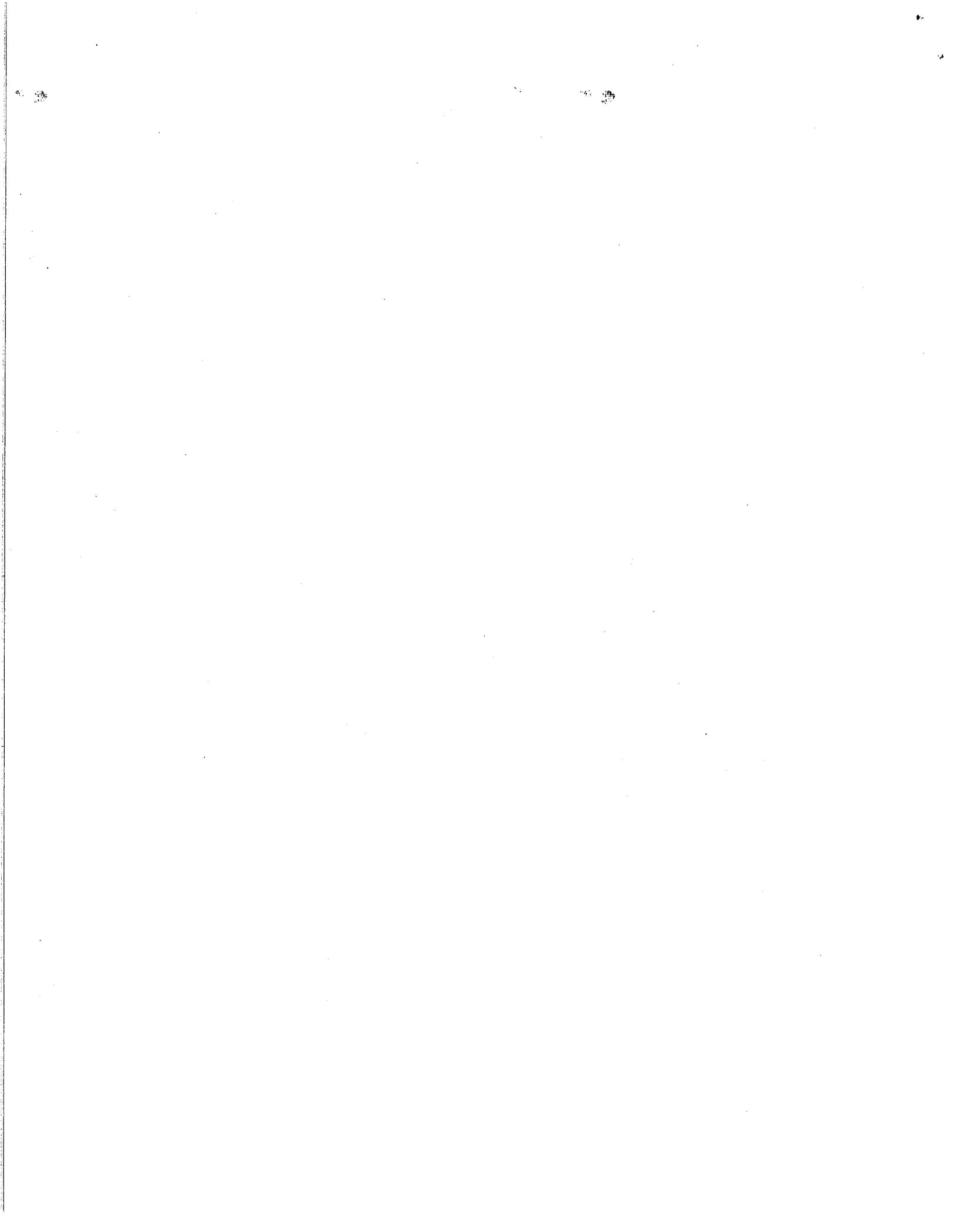


# 6<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA/ Writing Packet



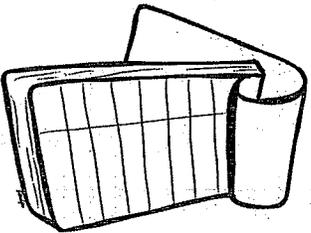
Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# Use These Reading Strategies

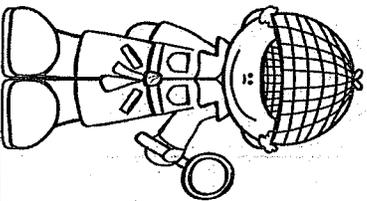
## SUMMARIZE

Use your own words to restate key story events.



## INFER

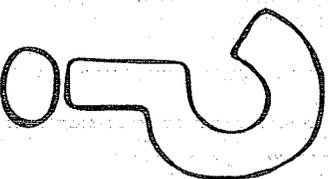
Coming to your own conclusion based on what you know from the text.



# Use These Reading Strategies

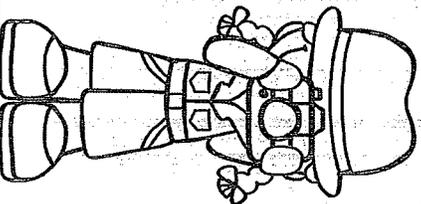
## QUESTION

Ask questions to further understand text.



## PREDICT

Make a logical guess as to what might happen next.



# The Tree Carving

The sun beat fiercely as they trudged through the woods. He couldn't believe they were lost. Harrison had checked the map several times. It didn't make any sense. Harrison and his father had always been sure of where they were going on their hikes. He couldn't believe that one wrong turn had sent them into their worst nightmare.

"Cell phone service?" Harrison's father asked again for the fifth time.

"No," Harrison shook his head. The nervous feeling in his stomach returned.

They kept walking. It had been two hours since they realized they were lost. Harrison and his father applied more sunscreen and took a break in the shade of a tall tree. They drank their water in small sips for fear of running out. They didn't talk about their worst fear, but they were both thinking it nonetheless.

"I won't let this happen again," Harrison's father said sternly. There was a bit of a quiver in his voice, which Harrison ignored.

"It's ok, dad, It's both of our faults."

They started walking again. This time holding the compass out toward the sun in bewilderment. Where was it that they had gone wrong? Harrison kept his eyes on the trunks of the trees as he walked. He felt it kept him grounded somehow. All at once Harrison spotted something familiar.

"Dad!" he yelled.

Harrison's dad seemed to snap out of his trance. "What is it son?"

"This tree! I remember it!" He ran towards the tree where there was a carving of a heart. He traced his fingers along it, thankful for whoever marked it. "I remember this tree was right next to Hunter's pond." Sure enough they saw the clearing for the pond where they had fished at the start of their trip.

"I know where we are," dad said. They both breathed a sigh of relief.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# The Tree Carving

**Summarize**

Briefly summarize the passage, "The Tree Carving."

**Infer**

Why do you think Harrison ignored his father when "there was a bit of a quiver in his voice?"

**Question**

What questions do you have about Harrison and his father's hike?

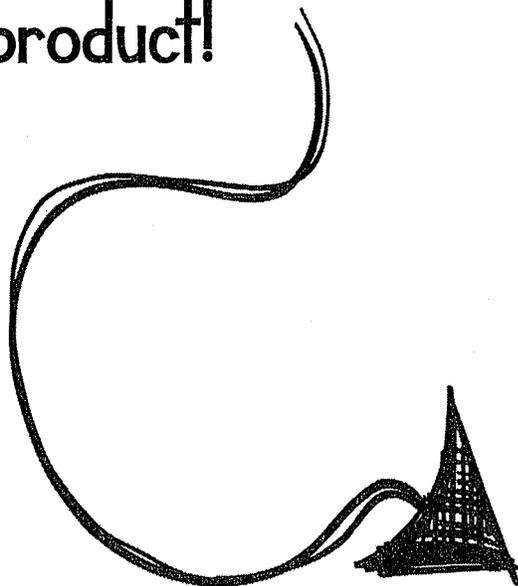
**Predict**

What do you think will happen next in Harrison and his father's journey?

**This reading passage with questions and anchor charts are part of my Reading Comprehension Fiction resource. With the full product you will receive:**

- ✎ A Table of Contents
- ✎ Teacher Tips
- ✎ Full sized reading strategy posters in color and B&W
- ✎ Half sized reading strategy posters in color and B&W
- ✎ 8 original fiction stories
- ✎ 8 sets of comprehension questions
- ✎ 4 graphic organizers (one for each reading strategy)

Click the picture below to check out the full product!



**FICTION**  
**COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

Includes 4 READING STRATEGIES:  
INFERRING, SUMMARIZING,  
QUESTIONING, AND PREDICTING

# PARAGRAPH OF THE WEEK

## 3 WRITING PROMPT ACTIVITIES

**NARRATIVE**

### If I Could Be Anyone...

There are times when we all wish we could be someone else for the day. Who would you choose to be? What would you do? Imagine you were that person for a whole day. Write a paragraph telling about one thing you did that day.

**Brainstorm**

**Don't Forget to Include:**

- ✓ 5 to 8 sentences
- ✓ A hook to grab your reader's attention
- ✓ Details and Description
- ✓ Conclusion Sentence

**INFORMATIONAL**

### On Expedition!

About to set out on an strange land. What things with you and why? What rivia? Write a paragraph will prepare for your ition.

**Brainstorm**

**OPINION**

### Screen Time!

feel kids have too much screen tie could be playing on a tablet, computer, or even watching you think kids spend too much of a screen. Write a paragraph ending your opinion.

**Brainstorm**

**OPINION**

### Must See!

Think about the best movie you have ever seen! What did you like about it? You are going to write a review for this movie. Write one paragraph telling your friends why they MUST see this movie!

**Brainstorm**

**Don't Forget to Include:**

- ✓ 5 to 8 sentences
- ✓ A topic sentence to start your paragraph
- ✓ Supporting details
- ✓ A conclusion sentence at the end

**Must See!**

**OPINION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

| Opinion Paragraph Rubric | Does Not Meet Expectations  | Meets Expectations  | Exceeds Meets Does Not Meet  |
|--------------------------|---|---|--|
| Ideas                    | Some ideas are related to the topic. Few supporting details are given.                          | All ideas are related to the topic. Good supporting details are included.   | All ideas are related to the topic. Strong and specific supporting details are included. |
| Organization             | Is missing a topic sentence or conclusion sentence. Some ideas are not in logical order.        | Has a topic sentence and conclusion sentence. Ideas are in a logical order. | The topic sentence and conclusion sentence are strong. Ideas are in order.               |
| Style                    | Voice and tone are not evident. Uses only simple words. Simple sentences are used.              | Voice and tone is used. Some strong word choice. Some variety in sentences. |  |
| Conventions              | Many errors in spelling, punctuation, or subject-verb agreement. Errors interfere with meaning. | Few errors in spelling, punctuation, or subject-verb agreement.             | Correct usage.   |

**ONE STOP TEACHER Shop**

# How to use this resource

The purpose of this resource is to provide your students with practice opportunities in writing well organized paragraphs.

Each "Paragraph of the Week" writing prompt page includes a writing prompt (designed to only be one paragraph long, but could easily be extended if desired), a reminder section, and a brainstorming section. On the back of each writing prompt page, you will find a space for students to write a final draft of their paragraph. Students can write their first draft in a notebook.

**NOTE: In the PAID version, optional drafting pages, optional revising and editing pages, a rubric, and a printer-friendly version are also included. The PAID version also comes with a FULLY EDITABLE file so you can adjust the wording or make your own.**

## **To use as Weekly Writing Homework or Morning Work:**

- Have students glue the directions sheet in their homework/morning work folder or notebook.
- Give your students a "Paragraph of the Week" writing prompt page each Monday.
- Students work on the paragraph throughout the week and turn in a final draft on Friday.
  - Example Timeline:
    - Monday – Brainstorm ideas
    - Tuesday – Write first draft
    - Wednesday – Revise and Edit (optional 2<sup>nd</sup> draft)
    - Thursday – Write final draft

## **To use during Literacy Centers:**

- Post directions in the center location.
- Once or twice per week have students visit the "Paragraph of the Week" center. During this time, students will work on their paragraph.
- Collect paragraphs on Friday (or the day of your choice).
- You could use the same timeline as the homework option.

**\*\* Can also be used as Early Finisher Tasks, Progress Monitoring, Writing Interactive Notebooks, or Writing Intervention Activities.**

# Paragraph of the Week

## Directions

At the beginning of each week, you will receive a writing topic. Throughout the week you are going to use this topic to write a well organized paragraph.

**Each night you must complete the following:**

**Monday:** Read the topic and brainstorm ideas.

**Tuesday:** Write a first draft.

**Wednesday:** Revise and edit your draft.

**Thursday:** Write a final draft on the back of your topic page.

\*Your final draft is due at the end of the week.

# Paragraph of the Week

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**Tuesday:** Write a first draft.

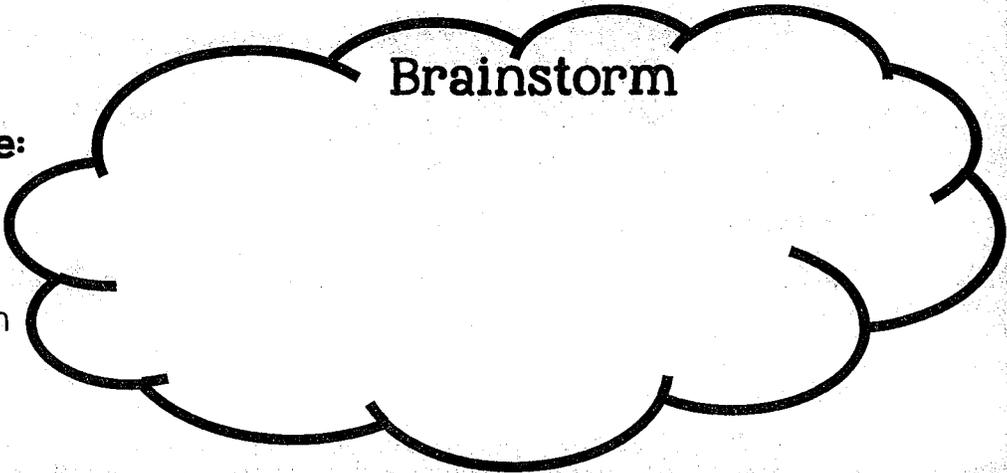
**Wednesday:** Revise and edit your draft.

**Thursday:** Write a final draft on the back of your topic page.

\*Your final draft is due at the end of the week.

## If I Could Be Anyone...

There are times when we all wish we could be someone else for the day. Who would you choose to be? What would you do? Imagine you were that person for a whole day. Write a paragraph telling about one thing you did that day.



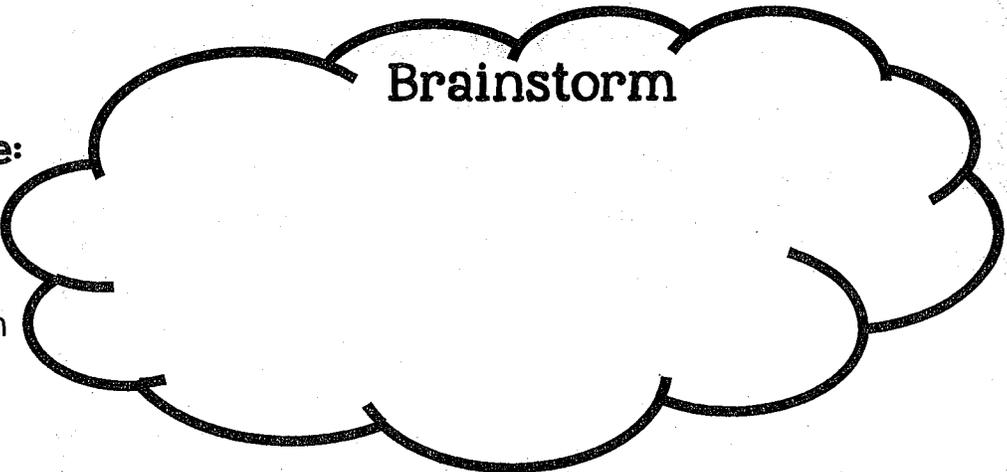
**Brainstorm**

### Don't Forget to Include:

- ✓ 5 to 8 sentences
- ✓ A hook to grab your reader's attention
- ✓ Details and Description
- ✓ Conclusion Sentence

## If I Could Be Anyone...

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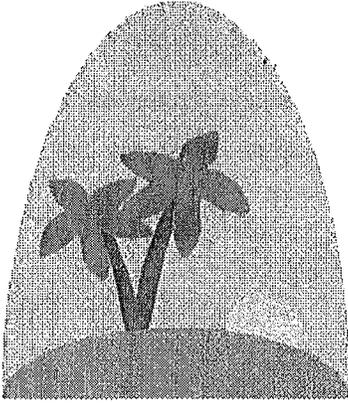


**Brainstorm**

### Don't Forget to Include:

- ✓ 5 to 8 sentences
- ✓ A hook to grab your reader's attention
- ✓ Details and Description
- ✓ Conclusion Sentence





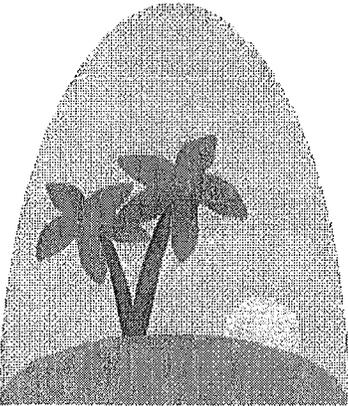
## Going on an Expedition!

Imagine you are about to set out on an expedition or a trip to a strange land. What things will you choose to take with you and why? What things will you need to survive? Write a paragraph explaining how you will prepare for your expedition.

**Brainstorm**

### Don't Forget to Include:

- ✓ 5 to 8 sentences
- ✓ A topic sentence to start your paragraph
- ✓ Supporting details
- ✓ A conclusion sentence at the end



## Going on an Expedition!

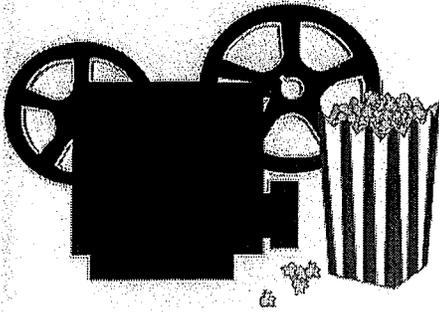
Imagine you are about to set out on an expedition or a trip to a strange land. What things will you choose to take with you and why? What things will you need to survive? Write a paragraph explaining how you will prepare for your expedition.

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### Don't Forget to Include:

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- ✓ A topic sentence to start your paragraph
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- ✓ A conclusion sentence at the end

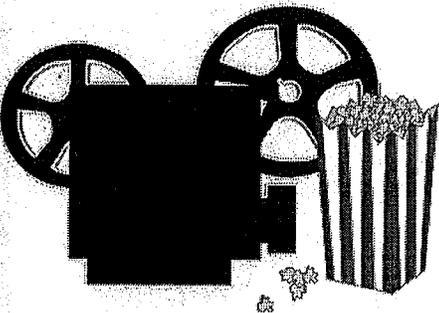


**Must See!**

Think about the best movie you have ever seen! What did you like about it? You are going to write a review for this movie. Write one paragraph telling your friends why they **MUST** see this movie!

**Brainstorm****Don't Forget to Include:**

- ✓ 5 to 8 sentences
- ✓ A topic sentence to start your paragraph
- ✓ Supporting details
- ✓ A conclusion sentence at the end

**Must See!**

Think about the best movie you have ever seen! What did you like about it? You are going to write a review for this movie. Write one paragraph telling your friends why they **MUST** see this movie!

**Brainstorm****Don't Forget to Include:**

- ✓ 5 to 8 sentences
- ✓ A topic sentence to start your paragraph
- ✓ Supporting details
- ✓ A conclusion sentence at the end



# Get MORE Paragraph of the Week Activities!

The **PATD** Version comes with...

- 60 Writing Prompt Activity Cards
- A Printer-Friendly version of ALL sheets
- Optional First and Second Drafting Pages with a Revising and Editing Checklist
- A Rubric for Paragraph Writing
- A Template to Make Your Own!

**PLUS, It's fully EDITABLE** so you can change things to fit your classroom's needs.

Learn more here... (click the pic)

## PARAGRAPH OF THE WEEK <sup>100%</sup> EDITABLE 60 WRITING PROMPT ACTIVITIES

**INFORMATION**

**Life Without Cell Phones**

It seems like everyone has a cell phone. Think about what life might be like if there were no cell phones. Write a paragraph explaining how life would be different without cell phones.

**Brainstorm**

**Directions**

At the beginning of each week, you will receive a writing topic for the week you are going to use this topic to write a well organized paragraph.

Each night you must complete the following:

1. Read the topic and brainstorm ideas.
2. Write a first draft.
3. Revise and edit your draft.
4. Write a final draft on the back of your topic card.

**Don't Forget to Include:**

- 3 to 6 sentences
- A topic sentence to start your paragraph
- A concluding sentence at the end

**NARRATIVE**

**Wait, I Can Explain...**

Imagine your parent leaves you home for the day and asks you to clean your room while they are gone. When they return home, they notice you did not clean your room. Write a paragraph explaining why you did not clean your room.

**OPINION**

**Screen Time**

Many adults feel kids have too much screen time. Write a paragraph explaining your opinion.

**Brainstorm**

**DIGITAL VERSION INCLUDED**

**ONE STOP TEACHER**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Attach this rubric to your story when you are finished.

|              | 5  | 3  | 1   |
|--------------|--|--|---|
| Organization | Easy to follow. Contains a beginning, middle, and end.                   | Some ideas are out of order and/or the story is missing a beginning, middle, OR end. | Hard to follow. Order does not make sense.                          |
| Ideas        | Contains many details  | Contains some details  | Contains few or no details  |
| Conventions  | Few or no spelling, grammar, capitalization, and/or punctuation mistakes | Some spelling, grammar, capitalization, and/or punctuation mistakes                  | Many spelling, grammar, capitalization, and/or punctuation mistakes |
| Emoji Usage  | All emojis were placed in the story correctly and logically              | Most emojis were placed in the story correctly and logically                         | No or few emojis were placed in the story correctly and logically   |
|              |  |  | Total Score: _____ /20  |

# Emoji Story

Create a story using all of the pieces to the right. Cut each out separately and glue them in place of a word. You must use each emoji once.



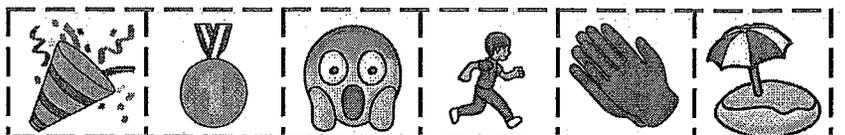
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Attach this rubric to your story when you are finished.

|              | 5  | 3  | 1   |
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|              |  |  | Total Score: _____ /20  |

# Emoji Story

Create a story using all of the pieces to the right. Cut each out separately and glue them in place of a word. You must use each emoji once.





# The History of St. Patrick's Day

## Who is St. Patrick?

St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland and an important man in the Christian world. Most of what we know about him has come from storytellers passing down tales from one generation to the next.

Patrick was born in England in the 5th century. He was kidnapped by pirates and sold to an Irish farmer as a slave at age sixteen. This led him to become very religious.

Six years later he escaped and traveled home to Ireland. After becoming a priest, Patrick went back to Ireland. He had a dream where the people of Ireland asked him to teach them about God.

Patrick spent the next 30 years talking to the Irish people about God, and converted almost all of Ireland to Christianity.

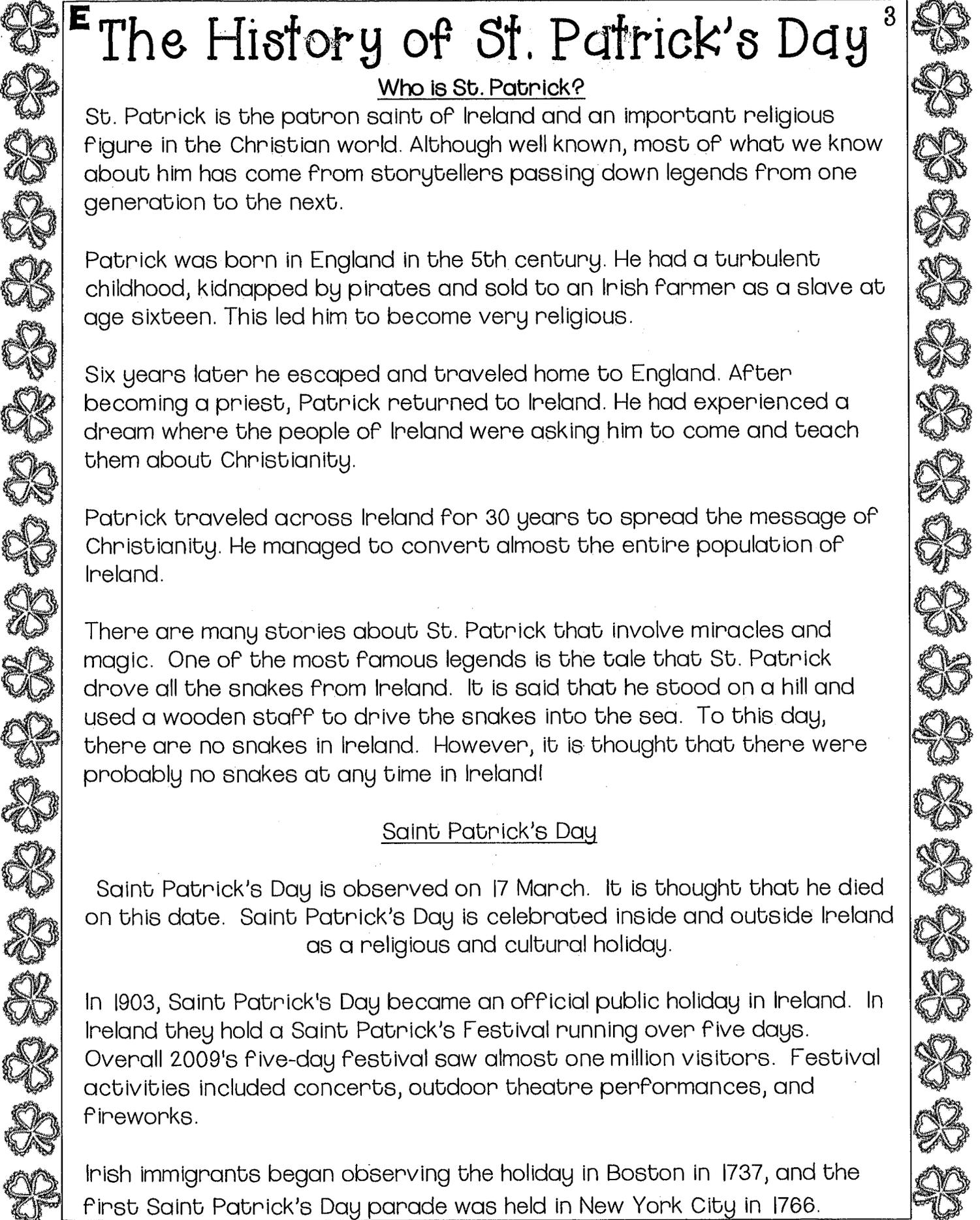
One of the most famous stories about St. Patrick is that he drove all the snakes from Ireland. In the story, he stood on a hill and used a wooden staff to drive the snakes into the sea. There are now no snakes in Ireland, but most people believe there probably never were.

## Saint Patrick's Day

Saint Patrick's Day is observed on 17 March. It is thought that he died on this date. Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated inside and outside Ireland as a religious and cultural holiday.

In 1903, Saint Patrick's Day became an official public holiday in Ireland. In Ireland they hold a Saint Patrick's Festival running over five days. Overall 2009's five-day festival saw almost one million visitors. Festival activities included concerts, outdoor theatre performances, and fireworks.

Irish immigrants began observing the holiday in Boston in 1737, and the first Saint Patrick's Day parade was held in New York City in 1766.



# <sup>E</sup>The History of St. Patrick's Day <sup>3</sup>

## Who is St. Patrick?

St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland and an important religious figure in the Christian world. Although well known, most of what we know about him has come from storytellers passing down legends from one generation to the next.

Patrick was born in England in the 5th century. He had a turbulent childhood, kidnapped by pirates and sold to an Irish farmer as a slave at age sixteen. This led him to become very religious.

Six years later he escaped and traveled home to England. After becoming a priest, Patrick returned to Ireland. He had experienced a dream where the people of Ireland were asking him to come and teach them about Christianity.

Patrick traveled across Ireland for 30 years to spread the message of Christianity. He managed to convert almost the entire population of Ireland.

There are many stories about St. Patrick that involve miracles and magic. One of the most famous legends is the tale that St. Patrick drove all the snakes from Ireland. It is said that he stood on a hill and used a wooden staff to drive the snakes into the sea. To this day, there are no snakes in Ireland. However, it is thought that there were probably no snakes at any time in Ireland!

## Saint Patrick's Day

Saint Patrick's Day is observed on 17 March. It is thought that he died on this date. Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated inside and outside Ireland as a religious and cultural holiday.

In 1903, Saint Patrick's Day became an official public holiday in Ireland. In Ireland they hold a Saint Patrick's Festival running over five days. Overall 2009's five-day festival saw almost one million visitors. Festival activities included concerts, outdoor theatre performances, and fireworks.

Irish immigrants began observing the holiday in Boston in 1737, and the first Saint Patrick's Day parade was held in New York City in 1766.

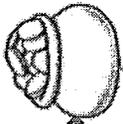




# Remember

## Recall and Make Inferences

1. What day is St. Patrick's Day?
2. Why is the story of St. Patrick removing snakes from Ireland considered to be a made-up story? \*  
\*Answer in a complete sentence



© Top Teaching Tasks

3. What was the first city in the USA to celebrate St. Patrick's Day?

4. Which of these statements about the text are true?

*Tick One*

|  | True | False |
|--|------|-------|
| St. Patrick is the patron saint of Scotland.                             |      |       |
| In 1903, St. Patrick's Day became an official public holiday in Ireland. |      |       |
| The first St. Patrick's Day parade in the USA was held in 1842.          |      |       |
| St. Patrick was a priest.  |      |       |

# Understand Explain Ideas and Concepts

1. Summarize the text in your own words.\*

2. List three adjectives you can find in the text.

3. Choose one word from the text that is new, difficult, or interesting to you. Write a sentence for each one showing that you understand what the word means.

4. What is the main idea of this text?\*



# Apply Use What You Read



1. Which text structure did the author use? (Circle one)

Description

Compare and Contrast

Order and Sequence

Problem and Solution

Cause and Effect



2. Write a email from Patrick explaining what it was like to be kidnapped.

Explain what happened and how he felt.

Use information from the text to give you ideas.

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>TO:</b>      |   |
| <b>FROM:</b>    |   |
| <b>CC:</b>      |   |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b> |   |
| <b>FONT</b> ▼   | <input type="text"/> ▼ <b>B</b> / <b><u>U</u></b> |
|                 |   |



# Analyze Organize Information



1. What text feature can you find in this text?

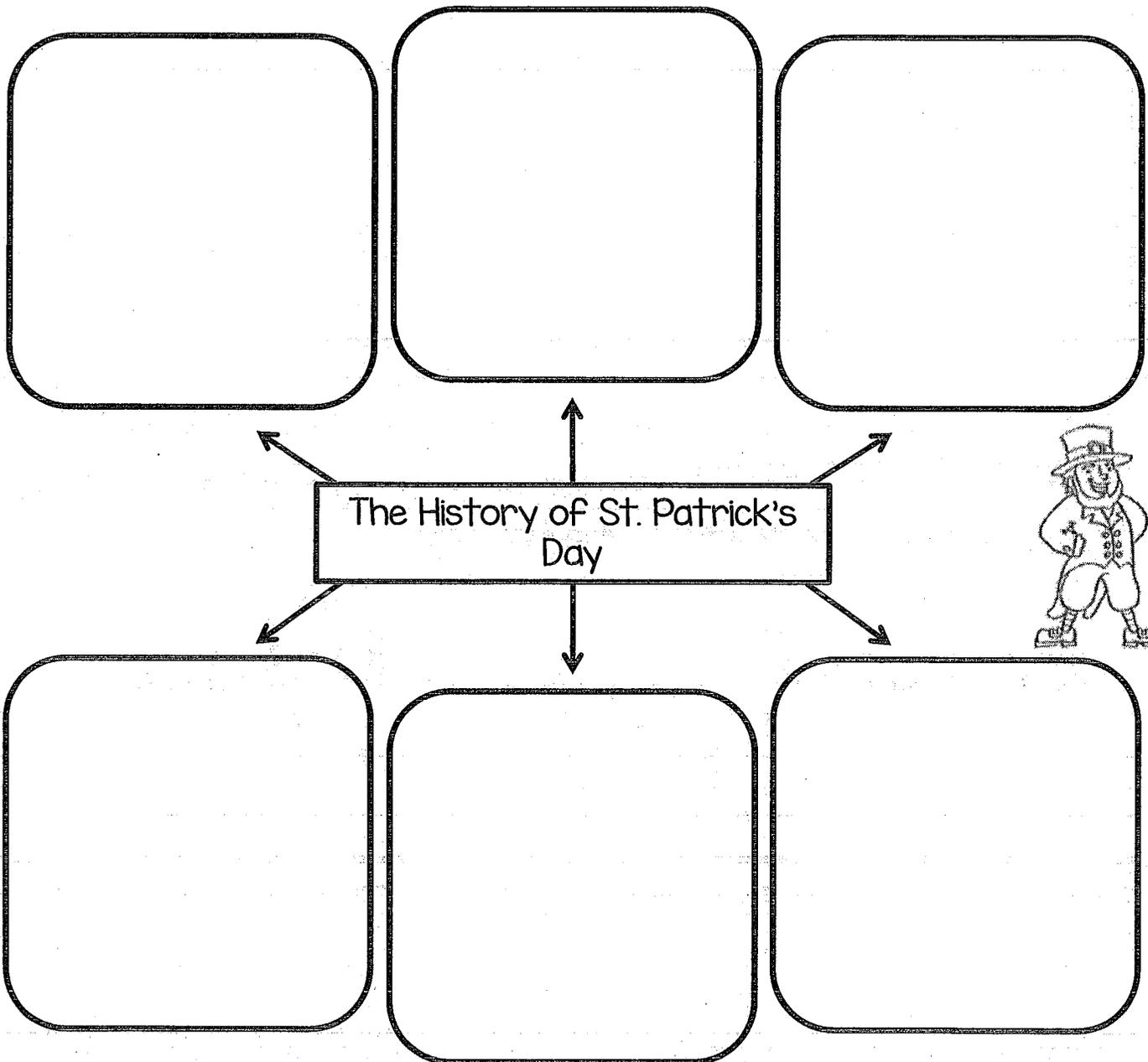
---

2. How does this text feature help you understand the information in the text?\*

\* Answer in a complete sentence

---

3. Organize the information about the history of St. Patrick's Day into an information web.



# Evaluate Form: An Opinion Using Evidence

1. "Our class should have a St. Patrick's Day celebration."

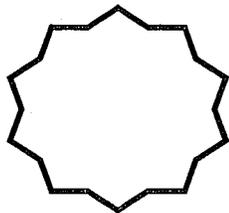
List your reasons for agreeing **AND** disagreeing with this statement.

| I agree with this statement because: | I disagree with this statement because: |
|--------------------------------------|---|
|                                      |   |

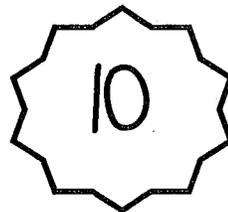
© Top Teaching Tasks

2. Give the text a rank or rating and explain why.\*

I give this article a

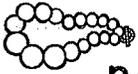


out of



because:





## PEARLS

Pearls are popular gems used in all types of jewelry. They are one of the gems that stand for June birthdays. Diamonds and rubies have to be polished and cut to look beautiful. No polishing or cutting is needed to bring out a pearl's beauty. They are the only gems that are made by living sea creatures and not dug up out of the ground. So, how do sea creatures make pearls?

Most natural pearls are made by oysters. Other mollusks, like clams and mussels, can make pearls. Those types of pearls are very rare. Both freshwater and saltwater oysters can make pearls.

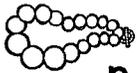
Oysters are bivalve mollusks. They have two shells. When the oyster grows, the shells must grow, too. A soft organ called a mantle makes the shell grow. The mantle uses minerals from the oyster's food to make nacre. Nacre is the lining on the inside of the shell. Sometimes, nacre is called mother of pearl.

The mantle gets irritated when something gets between it and the shell. It could be something like a grain of sand or a bit of broken shell. The oyster covers up the thing to protect itself from being bothered by it. The mantle uses nacre to make layers around the object. A pearl is formed! Sometimes, the pearls are nice and round. Sometimes, they are uneven. The most valuable pearls are perfectly round and smooth. Pearls can also come in many colors. Pearls can be white, gray, red, blue, green, or black.

Pearls made in the wild are called natural pearls. These are rare events. Natural pearls can be very valuable. In fact, the word "pearl" is a word used for something very rare and valuable. Because of this rare event, pearls can also be made with a little help from humans.

The process of making cultured pearls begins when a pearl harvester opens the oyster and makes a little slit in the mantle. Then, a bead is put between the mantle and the shell. The oyster then forms the pearl by layering nacre on the bead. This process takes about six months. It only needs a thin coating of nacre. Even though the pearls still look beautiful, cultured pearls aren't as expensive as natural pearls because they are more common.

Whether they are natural or cultured, pearls continue to be one of nature's beautiful miracles!



## PEARLS

Pearls are popular in all types of jewelry. The pearl is one of June's birthstones. Diamonds have to be cut to make them beautiful. They are dug up from the ground. A pearl is beautiful as soon as it's found. Pearls are the only gems that are made by living sea creatures. How do sea creatures make pearls?

Most natural pearls are made by oysters. Both freshwater and saltwater oysters can make pearls. Clams and mussels can also make pearls. Pearls from these mollusks are very rare.

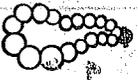
Oysters are bivalve mollusks. They have two shells. The shells grow when the oyster grows. A soft organ called a mantle makes the shell grow. The mantle needs minerals from the oyster's food. The minerals are used to make nacre. Nacre lines the inside of the shell. Nacre is also called mother of pearl.

Sometimes an object gets between the mantle and the shell. It could be a grain of sand or a bit of broken shell. The object irritates the mantle. The oyster uses nacre to cover up the object. It makes many layers around the object. A pearl is formed! Some pearls are nice and round. Some pearls are uneven. The most valuable pearls are perfectly round and smooth. Perfect pearls are rare. Pearls can also come in many colors. Pearls can be white, gray, red, blue, green, or black.

Pearls made by oysters in the wild are called natural pearls. They can be difficult to find. Natural pearls can be very valuable. In fact, the word "pearl" can describe something rare and valuable.

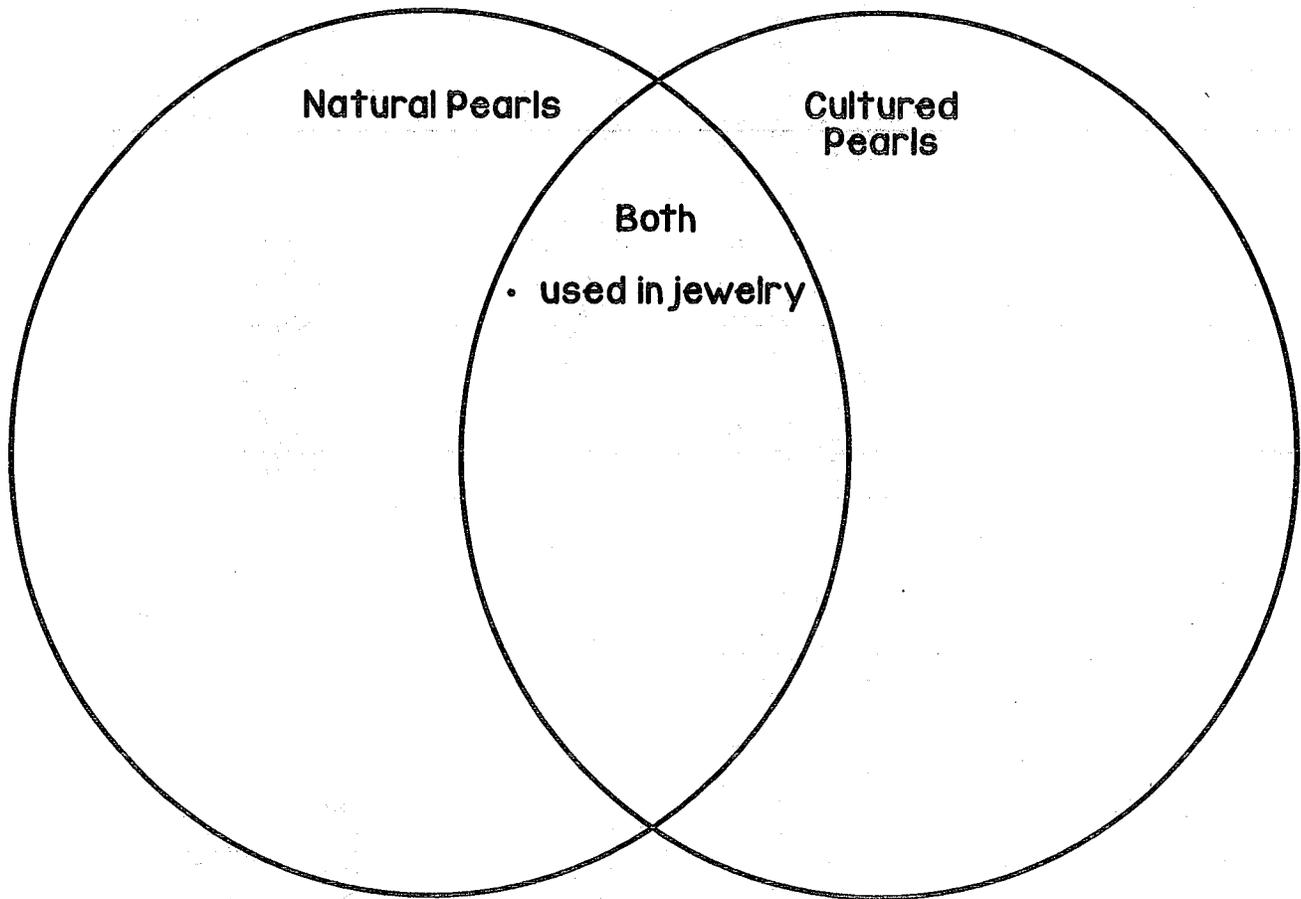
Pearls can also be made with a little help from humans. These types of pearls are called cultured pearls. It begins when a pearl harvester opens the oyster. He or she makes a little cut in the mantle. A bead is put between the mantle and the shell. The oyster layers nacre on the bead. These pearls take about six months to create. The pearls only need a thin coating of nacre on the bead. The pearls still look beautiful. However, cultured pearls aren't as expensive as natural pearls. This is because cultured pearls are more common than natural pearls.

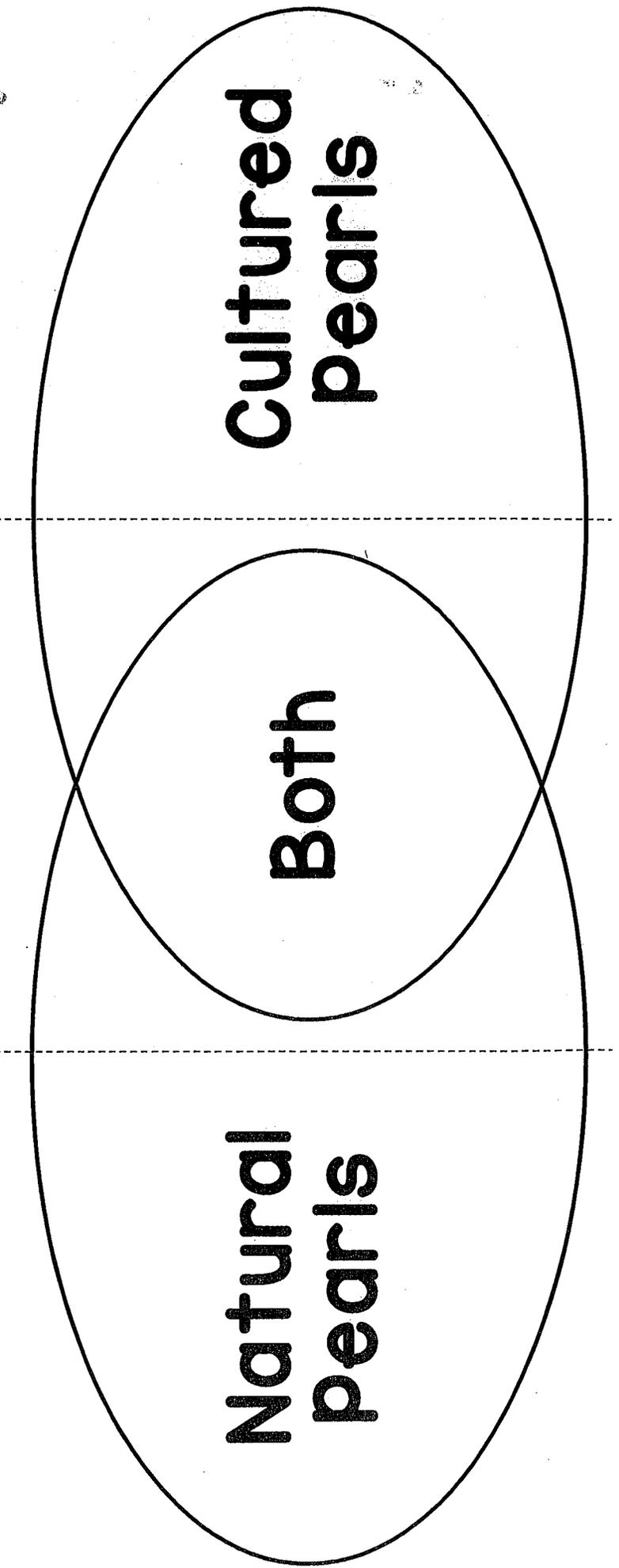
Pearls are one of nature's beautiful miracles!



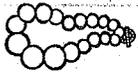
## PEARLS - SECOND READ

Go back through the text and highlight the characteristics of natural pearls with a yellow highlighter, marker, or colored pencil. Highlight the characteristics of cultured pearls in blue. Highlight what they have in common in green. Complete the Venn diagram using the information you highlighted. One has been done as an example.





**Directions:** Cut on dotted lines. Fold on solid line. Go back through the text and highlight the characteristics of natural pearls with a yellow highlighter, marker, or colored pencil. Highlight the characteristics of cultured pearls in blue. Highlight what they have in common in green. Complete the Venn diagram by writing the information you highlighted underneath the corresponding flap.



## PEARLS - THIRD READ

Go back through the text one last time to find causes and effects. Label the causes with a C and the effects with an E. Then, add them to the chart.

| Cause | Effect |
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Directions: Cut on dotted lines. Fold on solid line. Write causes on the flaps and the effects underneath the flaps.







## DIAMONDS

Cut diamonds are beautiful, making them a popular gem choice for jewelry. Most of the diamonds that are mined are not good enough to be cut into gems. Rough diamonds that are not colorless or perfectly clear may not be chosen for cutting into a gem. Diamonds are the hardest natural substance. Diamonds that are not gem-quality may end up on an industrial<sup>1</sup> cutting or grinding tool, possibly in the form of a diamond-tipped drill bit<sup>2</sup>. However, the demand for all qualities of diamonds is higher than what can be mined. How does the diamond industry keep up with the demand?

One solution is the use of synthetic diamonds. Synthetic diamonds are not mined. Rather, they are created in a laboratory. It is possible to create a synthetic diamond that is exactly like a natural one. Only a gemologist with special equipment can tell the difference between them. Almost all synthetic diamonds are for industrial use. This is because of the fact that most of the diamonds produced are colored because of the chemicals involved in making them. It is much more expensive to create a colorless diamond than it is to mine one. However, almost all of the "fancy" colored diamonds used in jewelry are synthetic.

Another solution to the high demand of gem-quality diamonds is diamond enhancement. Cut diamonds are treated to improve their quality. Laser drilling removes inclusions<sup>3</sup>. Sealants fill tiny cracks. Other treatments can either change or remove color. Although enhanced diamonds look better after treatment, they are priced lower than untreated diamonds of similar quality. Also, the seller has to disclose<sup>4</sup> that the diamond has been treated.

Finally, buyers who just want the look of the diamond without the huge price tag may be satisfied with a diamond simulant. A diamond simulant looks like a diamond. The most common simulant is the cubic zirconia. Cubic zirconia gems are synthetic. They aren't as hard as diamonds, so they are not for industrial use. A cubic zirconia is very sparkly and almost always colorless.

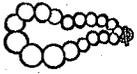
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<sup>1</sup>manufacturing

<sup>2</sup>the cutting part of the drill

<sup>3</sup>black carbon specks within a gem

<sup>4</sup>reveal



## PEARLS/DIAMONDS

**What is the problem as described in "Diamonds"?**

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**What is the solution to the problem in "Diamonds"?**

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**What are some similarities and differences between the pearl and diamond industries?**

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## PEARLS

Pearls are popular gems used in all types of jewelry, and they are one of the gems used to represent June birthdays. Unlike diamonds, emeralds, or other gemstones, no polishing or cutting is needed to bring out a pearl's beauty. They are the only gems that are made by living sea creatures and not dug up out of the ground. So, how do sea creatures make pearls?

Most natural pearls are made by oysters. Other mollusks, like clams and mussels, can produce pearls, but those types of pearls are very rare. Both freshwater and saltwater oysters can make pearls.

Oysters are bivalve mollusks because they have two shells. When the oyster grows, the shells must grow along with it, so a soft organ called a mantle is responsible for making the shell grow. The mantle uses minerals from the oyster's food to make nacre, which is the lining on the inside of the shell. Sometimes, nacre is called mother of pearl.

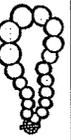
When something foreign gets between the mantle and the shell, like a bit of shell or sand, the mantle gets irritated, and the oyster covers up the foreign object to protect itself. The mantle uses nacre to make layers around the

object, and a pearl is formed. Sometimes the pearls are nice and round, and sometimes they are uneven. The most valuable pearls are perfectly round and smooth. Pearls can also come in a variety of colors, like white, gray, red, blue, green, and black.

When pearls are made in the wild, they are called natural pearls. This is a rare event, and these types of pearls can be very valuable. In fact, the word "pearl" is a metaphor for something very rare and valuable. Because of the rarity of this occurrence, pearls can also be made with a little help from humans.

The process of making cultured pearls begins when a pearl harvester opens the oyster and makes a little slit in the mantle. Then, a bead is put between the mantle and the shell. The oyster then forms the pearl by layering nacre on the bead. This process takes about six months since it only needs a thin coating of nacre. Even though they still look beautiful, cultured pearls aren't as expensive as natural pearls because they are more common.

Whether they are natural or cultured, pearls continue to be one of nature's beautiful miracles!



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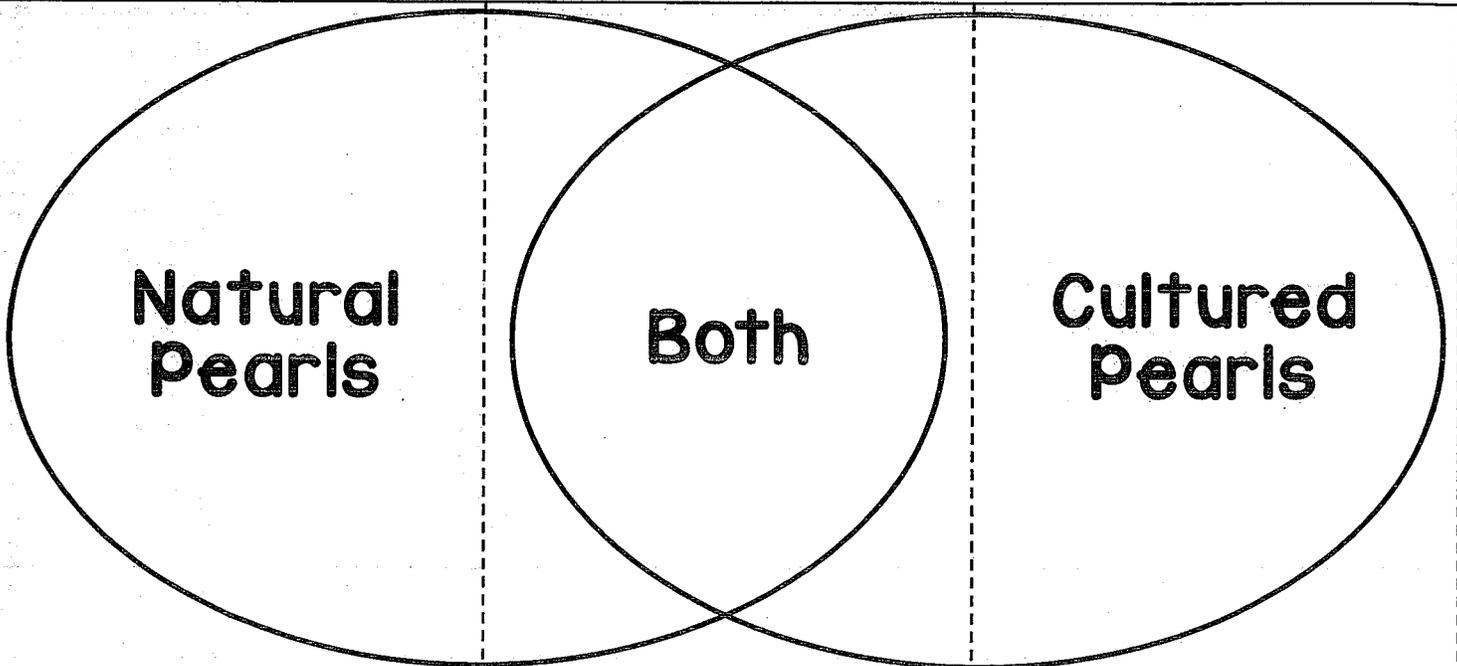
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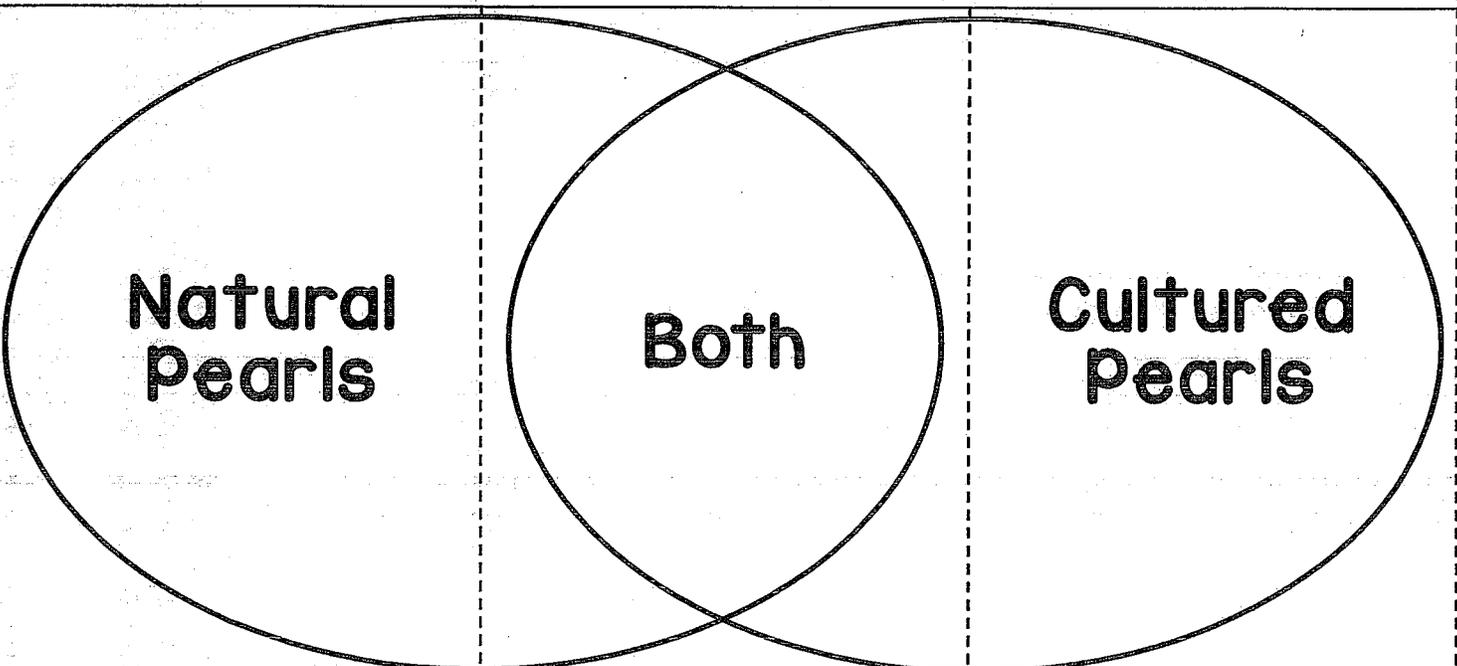
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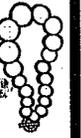
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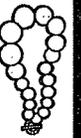


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**Cause**

**Effect**



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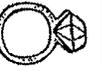
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# FOOD + ENERGY

By Kelly Anne

How many calories do you consume each day? You may not know, but most people are encouraged to eat roughly 2,000 calories a day, which is a pretty easy number to achieve. This amount should be enough to give Americans energy, but not enough to encourage weight gain. It is important for everyone to fuel their bodies with nutrients, so they can do what they need to do each day.

There are some athletes, however, who train so hard that they need to eat much more than 2,000 calories to maintain their weight. Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps is one of these athletes.

Michael ate at least 8,000 calories a day while training for the Olympics in 2008. Can you imagine eating that much? You would need to eat three of every meal, in order to meet that calorie count. That's three breakfasts, three lunches, and three dinners. All in one day! Most athletes will train for years in order to get in tip-top shape for their opportunity to shine at the Olympics. This training requires their bodies to be continuously working. In order to fuel their bodies for their daily workout, they need to consume a huge amount of calories.

Consuming 8,000 calories every day is not easy! It takes a great deal of work. In between his training sessions, Michael had to spend a lot of time eating. For breakfast, he would consume three loaded breakfast sandwiches, 2 cups of coffee, a five-egg omelet, a bowl of grits, three slices of french toast, and three chocolate chip pancakes. That's a lot of food, and it's just breakfast! For lunch, he would consume a pound of pasta with tomato sauce, two ham and cheese sandwiches, and high calorie energy drinks. At dinner, he would put away another pound of pasta, an entire pizza, and more energy drinks.

If you and I were to eat as much as Michael, we would be uncomfortable and likely gain weight. We're not working out for 6 to 8 hours a day like Michael was in 2008. But even if we were working out like Michael, would eating that food be healthy? Health specialist Klion says, "I think for him, because of his caloric demands, he can probably eat whatever he wants to." When you're consuming such high quantities of food, you don't want to eat food that doesn't taste good, so it makes sense that Michael chose foods he enjoyed. Who wouldn't want to eat pizza and pancakes every day? (Rubenstein). Specialists do recommend, however, that athletes focus on consuming foods that will build their muscles and give them energy. Protein and carbohydrates work best.

How do you think your diet compares to that of Michael Phelps'? While you may not be exercising as much as he was, it is still important to consume enough nutrients that you have enough fuel for the day. Make sure you eat a healthy breakfast, lunch, and dinner in order to be prepared!

# PROPER FUEL

By Kelly Anne

"I'm starving, Mom," Jade said as they pulled out of the driveway.

"I know, honey," Jade's mom said soothingly. "Unfortunately, all we had were some tortilla chips and cheese. You can eat the nachos I made you, and I'll have something else ready for you after soccer practice. We're running late, and don't have time to stop anywhere. I'll swing by the grocery store after I drop you off."

Jade looked at the plate of nachos on her lap and made a face. She wasn't sure that she liked nachos... but she guessed she should try them. She grabbed one and slowly raised it to her lips. She took her first bite, and smiled wide.

"Mmmm, nachos are awesome!" she declared. She dug in, and finished the plate of nachos in no time.

They pulled into the soccer field a little early. Jade jumped out, and ran to meet up with her friends. She noticed instantly that her footsteps felt a little heavier than normal.

"Hmmm," she thought to herself. "I guess I need to stretch a little more." Jade sat on the grass and began stretching with her teammates.

"Hey Jade!" Shayle hollered. "How's it going?"

"It's good. How about you?"

Shayle's hand went to her stomach, "I'm starving!" she explained.

"I was," Jade said, "but I had some nachos in the car."

"Nachos?" Shayle asked. "Do you really think that'll be good for your stomach? I can't have anything heavy before practice, which is why I'm so hungry now, I didn't eat at all before I came."

"Well, I did feel a little off when I ran over here, but I need to have some fuel in me. If I don't eat anything, then I feel light-headed."

"Yeah, I get that." Shayle replied.

Jade reached into her soccer bag, and noticed something shiny. "Hey! I have a granola bar if you want it."

"Sure, that'd be great." Shayle grabbed the granola bar and munched on it. She instantly felt better.

Forty minutes into soccer practice, Shayle and Jade had run, jumped, kicked, and were now scrimmaging each other. Jade was definitely feeling those nachos. She was grateful for each small break their coach allowed them. Then their coach said, "Okay, now I want you all to do some conditioning. It's time to run a mile. Go hop on the track. Give me four laps."

Jade grimaced. She knew there was no way she could run a mile without her nachos coming up. She ran over to her coach and told her what had happened. Her coach understood, but gave her a lecture about proper nutrition while the other girls ran. Jade knew that she would never eat nachos before practice again.



# MATH MORALS

By Kelly Anne

"Brrrrring," went the school bell. The crisp air on the playground felt amazing. I didn't want to go inside. The big trees surrounding our playground were just beginning to change colors and the slides, swings, and giant field were all calling my name.

"Come on Jay!"

I grabbed my backpack and jogged into our school. I briskly walked to the classroom. Miss Fischer hates it when I'm late.

"Hey man!" Jordan called out.

"Hey Jordan," we high-fived.

I strolled into our large classroom, and began unloading my backpack. I set my homework out on our table, and hung up my backpack.

The light streamed into our classroom through the big open windows, and I looked outside to where other students were still walking in. On my way back to my seat, I waved hi to Miss Fischer. She waved in return, and started checking homework. I began my morning work.

As soon as our homework was checked, and our morning work was turned in, Miss Fischer announced that it was time for a Pop Math Quiz!

"Good thing Mom made me study last night," I thought. I was going to ace this one! Miss Fischer slowly walked around the classroom, leaving 4 quizzes on each table. I grabbed one, and handed another to Jordan.

"Hey, are you ready for this?" Jordan asked me.

"I think so," I responded.

Jordan just grimaced. He didn't have to say anything for me to realize he wasn't ready for the quiz. I felt bad for him, but was excited that this would help me boost my math grade! I grabbed a pencil from the table cubby, and wrote my name at the top. I skimmed over the questions, and felt comfortable about each one.

Miss Fischer paced around the classroom while I worked on Question 1. After a minute, she sat down at her desk and began grading yesterday's essays.

"Psssst," Jordan said under his breath. I looked up at him. "Jay, what'd you get for Question 1?"



## **WATER BOTTLES ARE BAD**

By Kelly Anne

Does your family rely on a constant supply of water bottles? They may be easy to grab when you're on the go, but they are horrible for the environment. Water bottles are a major source of pollution on Earth. Once you throw away a water bottle, it can take over 1,000 years for it to decompose. Also, the fuel used to manufacture and then ship the bottles is harmful to the environment. Scientists now know that plastic isn't just horrible for our planet, it is not very good for us either. Chemicals in plastic bottles can easily seep out into the water if the bottle is exposed to heat. (Peppard) Would you like to drink chemicals from plastic? I know I wouldn't! So we know that water bottles are bad for the earth, and can be bad for our bodies, but they also put a cramp in our wallets! Some families will spend \$500 on water bottles in one year. That's a lot of money for something you can get for free from a tap! Water bottles are bad, and we should get rid of them.

## **WATER BOTTLES ARE GREAT**

By Kelly Anne

When was the last time you enjoyed water from a plastic water bottle? Water is an essential nutrient to enjoy. We would die without water! Water bottles are a great way to safely enjoy water. There are many times when it is dangerous to drink water from the tap. During these times, we're lucky to have bottled water that we can enjoy. This is especially true in natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina. The water can stay in bottles for extended periods of time, making it great to have on hand in preparation for a dire event. Not only is water essential, but it's also a great drink to consume. Instead of grabbing bottles of soda, we need to be grabbing bottles of water! Water is non-addictive, hypoallergenic, caffeine-free, calorie free, and contains no artificial colors, flavors, or fats! Bottled water is a great drink for us to enjoy, and more people should be enjoying it.

## **WATER BOTTLE ALTERNATIVES**

By Kelly Anne

Many people are upset about bottled water. They feel that the bottles are detrimental to the earth. However, there's an easy alternative! We just need to recycle our water bottles! Instead of sending them to a landfill, the bottles can be reused and made into new things. By recycling our plastic, we can help keep valuable materials out of landfills. This not only helps keep our landfills smaller, but it also can help reduce energy use and emissions. Another alternative to using bottled water, is purchasing a reusable water bottle, and filling it with water from your tap. Tap water is healthy and inexpensive! If you use the same bottle over and over, you are able to keep plastic bottles out of the landfill, which is great for our environment. Many people may be upset about how wasteful water bottles can be, but there are great alternatives that help us keep the Earth in good shape!





# FREE AUTHOR'S PURPOSE PIE'ED PASSAGES!

## 5 Test Prep Passages!

Emperor penguins have unique breeding behaviors that are unlike any other penguin species. Following courtships that last several weeks, each female penguin lays one single egg and then departs to retrieve food from the sea. It takes about 65 days for the female penguins to make the entire journey to the sea and back to their eggs.

While the female penguins are gone, the fathers balance the cold by warm by covering them with their own body weight and their own thick, calloused skin. The male emperor penguins incubate their eggs during the coldest time of the year in Antarctica. Male emperor penguins lose about 40% of their body weight during this period. After the eggs hatch, the male emperor penguins usually return with food for their chicks. When their partner's arrival, leave immediately for their own food. When the chicks hatch from the egg, the mother feeds its chick by regurgitating food it has eaten. For the next several weeks, the male and female emperor penguins alternate duties caring for their chicks.

The author's purpose for writing the above passage is to

- A. explain how brave male emperor penguins are
- B. describe the unusual courtship of male and female emperor penguins
- C. show how the male emperor penguin dutifully keeps its family warm
- D. explain the use of an emperor penguin's brood patch

We've all heard about global warming, right? The rising Earth temperature has caused ice-covered areas on our planet to melt away. The disappearance of ice is a major threat to animals like penguins. Less ice means less habitat and less food for penguins. Penguin populations have decreased by 80% in some areas of the Southern Hemisphere, and most scientists agree that climate change is the primary cause of this grim statistic.

For instance, African penguins eat sardines and anchovies that follow a cold current of water. As the ocean heats up, their food source is moving further away from their habitat. If the current continues to move, the penguins will end up losing their food source, as they can only swim about 25 miles from their home.

We need to unite to protect endangered animals like penguins, by working together to stop global warming. Walk or ride your bike instead of driving short distances. Share rides whenever possible. Write to lawmakers requesting that they create laws that protect the environment. We need to take action now to prevent penguins and other endangered animals from becoming a part of the Earth's past.

What was the author's purpose for writing the above passage?

- A. to explain how the Earth's environment is changing
- B. to persuade readers to help save endangered animals by working to stop global warming
- C. to persuade readers to help African penguins find a new food source before they become extinct
- D. to explain how laws are written to help protect the environment



by Deb Hanson

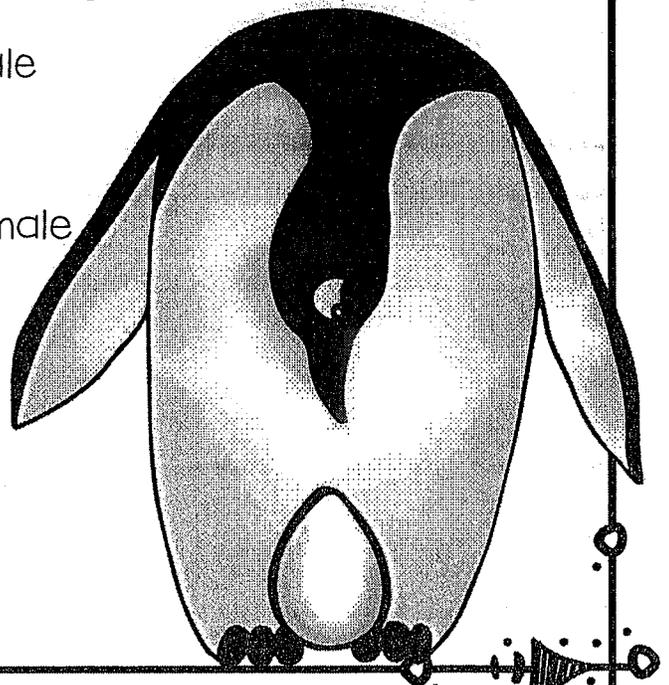
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While the female penguins are gone, the fathers balance the eggs on their feet. They keep the eggs warm by covering them with their brood patch, a thick layer of feathered skin. The male emperor penguins huddle together, protecting their eggs during the coldest and darkest part of the year in Antarctica. Male emperor penguins typically lose half of their body weight during this period.

The female penguins usually return with food for their chicks just a few days before the eggs hatch. The male partners, who have been anticipating their partner's arrival, leave immediately for *their* opportunity to travel to the sea for food. When the chicks hatch from their eggs, each mother feeds its chick by regurgitating food it has already eaten directly into its chick's mouth. For the next several months, the males and females alternate duties caring for their chick and hunting for fish to eat.

What was the author's purpose for writing the above passage?

- A. to persuade readers how brave male emperor penguins are
- B. to inform readers of the unusual breeding behaviors of male and female emperor penguins
- C. to explain how the male emperor penguin successfully keeps its egg warm
- D. to inform readers of the use of an emperor penguin's brood patch



"When am I going to return to normal?" Percy Penguin asked his mother.

"What are you talking about, my dear?"

"Our feathers!! We are shedding them all over the place, and I look *ridiculous*. I have random patches of ugly old feathers along with my new, sleek feathers," Percy complained.

"Just be patient, Percy. This happens to all of us once a year, so we are all in the same boat. Our new feathers are pushing the old ones out. The entire process takes about four weeks for us, so we are about halfway done already," Mom cheerfully responded.

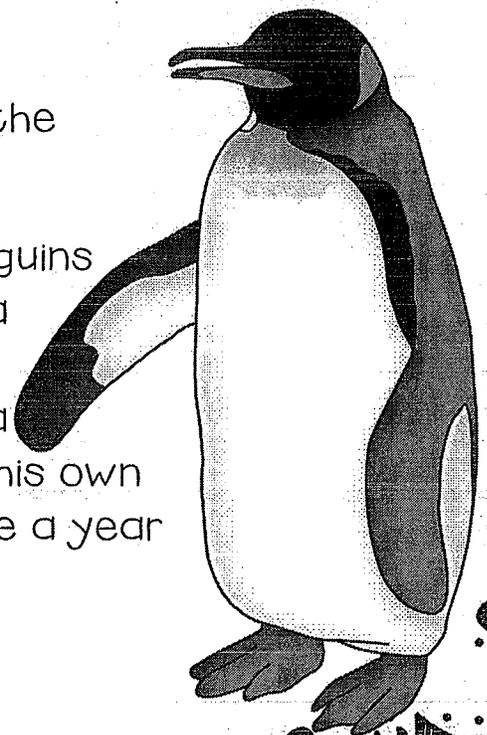
Percy gasped. "Are you *kidding* me? I really have to endure this for another two weeks? But I'm *starving* because you said I can't go into the water when I am molting."

Percy's mom had grown weary of her son's pessimistic attitude. Her tone turned business-like. "Percy, I've heard enough whining from you. Trust me. You *will* survive. Go for a waddle and try to take your mind off your troubles."

Percy turned away and muttered under his breath, "Easy for her to say... she's not a growing penguin like I am. I bet I am way hungrier than she is right now."

What was the author's purpose for writing the above passage?

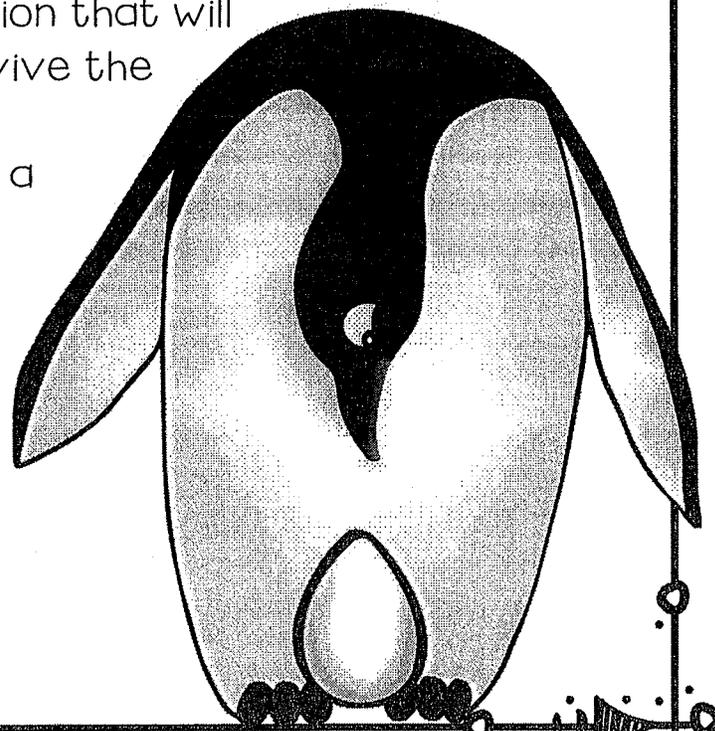
- A. to explain the process of molting for penguins
- B. to entertain readers with a story about a young, grumpy penguin
- C. to entertain readers with a story about a penguin leaving his mother to set off on his own
- D. to inform readers how penguins molt once a year



There is a fierce blizzard raging all around the Antarctic plain, yet the male emperor penguins remain in place, huddled together. The icy temperature seems to have frozen in place at 76 degrees below zero, but the mass of penguins does not seek shelter from the harsh weather conditions. Their only concern at the moment is the safety and temperature of the fragile eggs balanced on their feet. The biting 124 mile-per-hour winds pummel them day and night, minute by minute, but still they stand. They haven't eaten a thing for nearly two months, but still they stand. Darkness almost constantly surrounds them, but still they stand, enduring some of the harshest weather conditions on earth, all for the life of their chicks, growing inside the eggs.

What was the author's purpose for writing the above passage?

- A. to describe the harsh conditions that male emperor penguins withstand to care for their eggs
- B. to inform readers of winter weather conditions in Antarctica
- C. to persuade readers to take action that will help male emperor penguins survive the winter weather in Antarctica
- D. to inform readers of how fragile a penguin's egg is



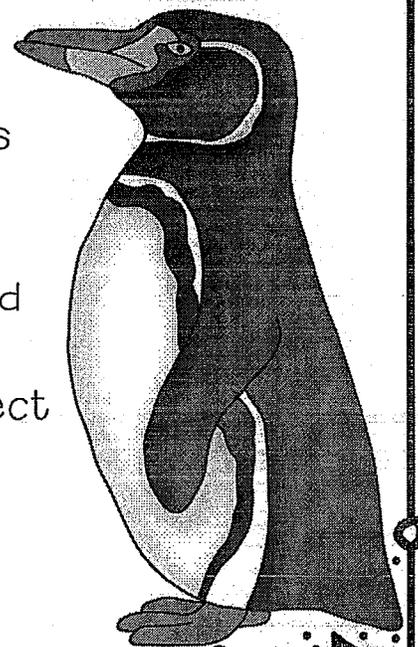
We've all heard about global warming, right? The rising Earth temperature has caused ice-covered areas on our planet to melt away. The disappearance of ice is a major threat to animals like penguins. Less ice means less habitat and less food for penguins. Penguin populations have decreased by 80% in some areas of the Southern hemisphere, and most scientists agree that climate change is the primary cause of this grim statistic.

For instance, African penguins eat sardines and anchovies that follow a cold current of water. As the ocean heats up, their food source is moving further away from their habitat. If the current continues to move, the penguins will end up losing their food source, as they can only swim about 25 miles from their home.

We need to unite to protect endangered animals like penguins, by working together to stop global warming. Walk or ride your bike instead of driving short distances. Share rides whenever possible. Write to lawmakers requesting that they create laws that protect the environment. We need to take action *now* to prevent penguins and other endangered animals from becoming a part of the Earth's past.

What was the author's purpose for writing the above passage?

- A. to explain how the Earth's environment is changing
- B. to persuade readers to help African penguins find a new food source before they become extinct
- C. to persuade readers to help save endangered animals by working to stop global warming
- D. to explain how laws are written to help protect the environment



Penguins are well-known for their black and white coloration. Do you know *why* they are covered in black and white feathers, though? Their two-tone color pattern is actually an adaptation that helps them survive from predators while they are in the water.

Leopard seals and orcas are the main underwater predators of penguins. However, the penguins' white bellies make them more difficult to see underwater because their bellies blend in with the snow and sunlight above. When orcas or other predators are swimming below the penguin, they are well-camouflaged.

Penguins also have predators that circle the skies above, waiting to attack a distracted penguin. Skuas and Australian sea eagles like to eat penguins. In this case, it's the penguins' black backs that help camouflage and protect them. When penguins are swimming in search of food themselves, their black backs blend against the dark ocean water, making it much more difficult to spot them from above. Clearly, the black and white coloration of penguins is not an unimportant coincidence. Rather, it is an important adaptation key to their survival.

What was the author's purpose for writing the above passage?

- A. to inform readers of which animals are penguin predators
- B. to explain how camouflage helps various animals
- C. to persuade readers to help protect penguins from predators
- D. to explain how penguins' two feather colors help protect them from predators

