

JULY

fluency passages

Name _____

Date _____

The History of Independence Day

Independence Day is a national holiday in America. It is celebrated annually on July 4. Many people participate in July 4th festivities, like picnics and fireworks, but not everyone knows the real meaning behind this important holiday. Independence Day is a celebration of the birth of the United States of America as an independent country. Thirteen colonies were established by settlers who left England and the Kingdom of Great Britain. The people who lived in these territories did not think that the British king should have authority over them and they drafted The Declaration of Independence. This document stated that the colonies should be free of British rule and that they planned to establish their own country with their own leaders. The Declaration was adopted on July 4, 1776. During this time, the colonists fought a war with Britain. The British lost, and freedom was won. The United States of America was now a country, and the colonists could now call themselves Americans!

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The History of Independence Day

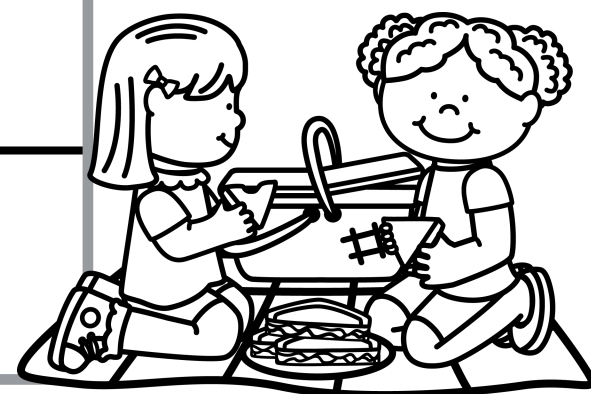
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The Rainbow Picnic

Each year, our teacher celebrates the end of the school year by holding a class picnic. Each student signs up to bring something to share with the class, and we head on an outing to the park that is directly behind our school. We spend the day eating, playing games, and enjoying each other's company for one last time before moving on to fourth grade. This year our teacher urged us to bring healthy foods to the picnic instead of just having junk food. I supplied watermelon and blueberries. My best friend Lexi contributed purple grapes. Keegan donated carrots and dip. My teacher Mrs. Nelson had a large platter filled with celery and cucumbers, as well as yellow and red pepper slices. "We should call this the Rainbow Picnic," I laughed when I saw all the foods placed together on the table. "Good idea!" the entire class agreed. "It is a new tradition!"

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Comprehension Questions: The Rainbow Picnic

1. Where does the class hold their picnic?

2. How do the students decide what to bring to the picnic?

3. What do you think the word urged means?

4. What did the author supply for the picnic?

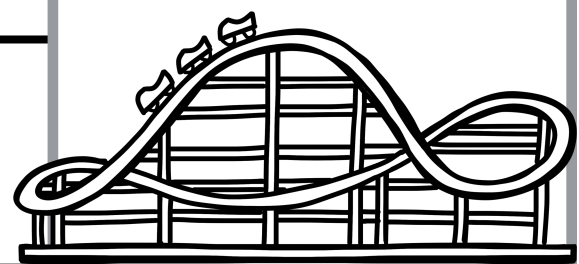
5. Why do you think the author said they should call it the Rainbow Picnic?

6. Tell about a tradition your school has.

Lost at the Amusement Park

Benny looked anxiously around. Only a few short moments 9
ago, he was with his friends. Now, after stopping to tie his 21
shoe, he was suddenly alone. The amusement park was a huge 32
place and it was packed with people as far as the eye could 45
see. Benny and his friends had planned all year to go to the 58
amusement park. Now that they were older, their parents 67
had agreed to let them go off on their own for a little while. 81
Dad's words rang in Benny's ears. "Be careful Benny. Make 91
sure you don't get lost from the other kids." Everyone had 102
agreed to meet at the picnic area at 1:00, but Benny did not 115
want to show up there alone without the rest of the group. 127
He wanted his dad to know he had been responsible. Benny 138
looked around one more time. "Allie!" he called out, seeing his 149
friend's familiar face. "Wait for me!" "There you are 158
Benny!" she smiled. "We thought we had lost you." 167

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Comprehension Questions: Lost at the Amusement Park

1. How did Benny get lost from his friends?

2. Why was it hard for Benny to find his friends?

3. What did Dad tell Benny before sending him off with his friends?

4. What did Benny want to prove to Dad?

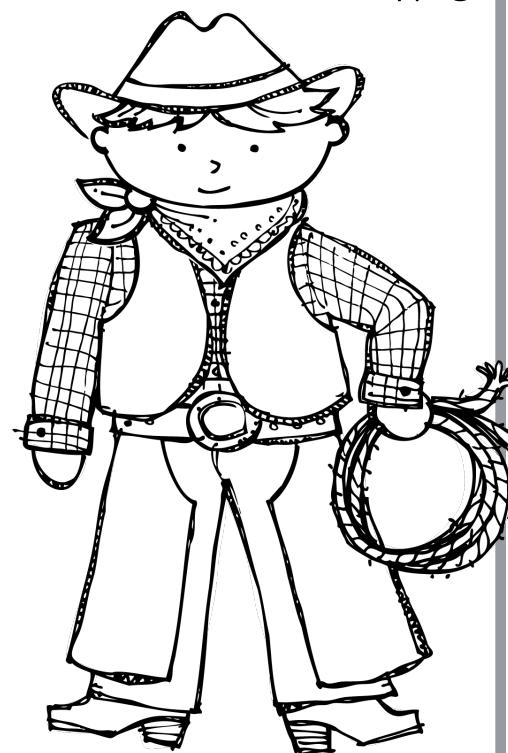
5. How did the story end?

6. Do you think the parents made a good decision to let the kids go on their own for a while? Why or why not?

The Rodeo

Cowboy Jake was in a quandary. The rodeo was days away 11
 and his best wrangler had broken his arm. "How can my team 23
 win when our best cowboy can't swing his lasso?" Jake asked 34
 Cowboy Luke. "We have to find a replacement," Luke said 44
 sorrowfully. "How are we going to find a cowpoke good enough 55
 to beat Cowboy Bob's team?" Jake inquired. "Well, my sister 65
 Jessie is awfully good with her lasso," Luke replied. "We can't 76
 use a girl!" Jake exclaimed. "I don't see another choice," Luke 87
 answered. "Okay," Jake agreed. "Cowgirl Jessie it is." On the 97
 day of the rodeo, the teams were tied. "The final event is Calf 110
 Roping," the announcer blared. Cowgirl Jessie entered the ring 119
 against Cowboy Cody. "The first cowpoke to rope this calf 129
 wins," the announcer said. Immediately, Jessie's rope swung 137
 over her head, and the calf was roped before Cody knew what 149
 had happened. "Cowgirl Jessie, you saved the day," Luke smiled. 159
 "Do you want to be on our team from here on out?" "I sure 173
 do," Jessie smiled. 176

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Comprehension Questions: The Rodeo

1. What do you think quandary means?

2. What was the problem in this story?

3. How was the problem solved?

4. What did Cowgirl Jessie do when she entered the ring?

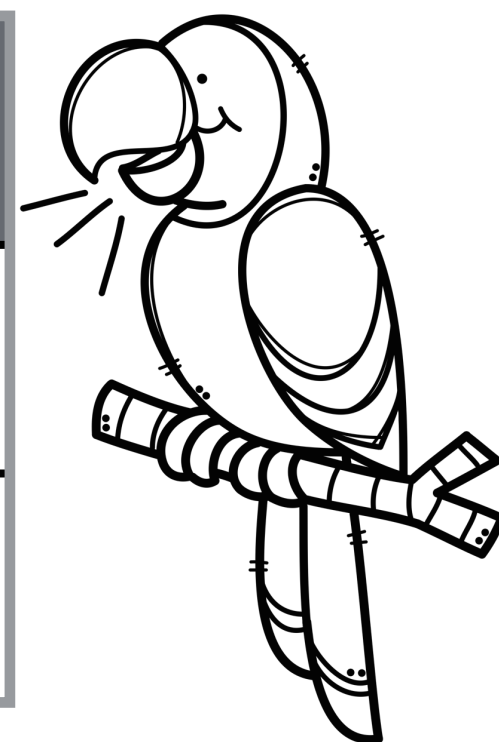
5. What lesson did Luke learn in this story?

6. What do you think a wrangler is?

What Pet to Get

More than anything, Nina wanted a pet. She was a highly sought after pet sitter, yet she didn't have a pet of her own. She loved taking care of a variety of animals: dogs, cats, birds, fish, hamsters, and even a hedgehog were all on Nina's client list. Her parents hesitated to get Nina a pet of her own however. "You take great care of other pets," they reasoned, "but we worry that you won't take care of your own as well." "Why would you think that?" Nina asked. "Look at your room," they answered. "You do not keep it tidy, and you don't clean up after yourself. If you want your own pet, you must show us that you won't rely on us to care for it." Nina decided that they had a good point, so she made an effort to take more responsibility at home. Finally, her parents said, "Nina, we have noticed your hard work. You may have a pet of your own." "Now to decide what pet to get!" Nina smiled.

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Comprehension Questions: What Pet to Get

1. What do you think it means that Nina was a “highly sought after pet sitter”?

2. What are some of the animals Nina took care of?

3. Why did Nina’s parents hesitate to get her a pet of her own?

4. Do you agree with Nina’s parents hesitating to get her a pet of her own?
Why or why not?

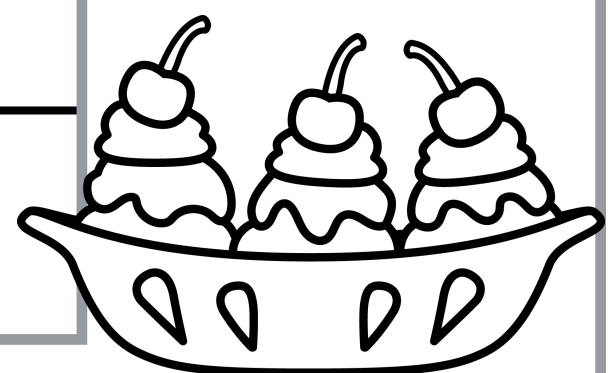
5. How did Nina convince her parents that she should have her own pet?

6. What connections can you make between your life and this story?

The Ice Cream Shop

For as long as he could remember, Mr. May had yearned 11
to own an ice cream shop. As a kid, he used to sit at the 26
counter of his neighborhood ice cream parlor watching 34
the owner dip sundaes, banana splits, cones, and 42
milkshakes for happy customers. "Someday I will have a 51
place just like this," he would tell himself and anyone else 62
who would listen. As he grew into an adult, he thought 73
about his dream less and less. He went to work as an 85
accountant, and it kept him satisfied until it was time to 96
retire. One day shortly after retirement, he visited his 105
hometown. Imagine his surprise when he saw a "for 114
sale" sign in the window of the ice cream shop he had 126
frequented as a kid. He knew immediately what he had 136
to do. "It is time to start a new chapter of my life!" he 150
said excitedly. 152

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Comprehension Questions: The Ice Cream Shop

1. What had Mr. May's dream always been?

2. What did Mr. May tell himself and others as a child?

3. What did Mr. May do as an adult?

4. What do you think the word yearned means?

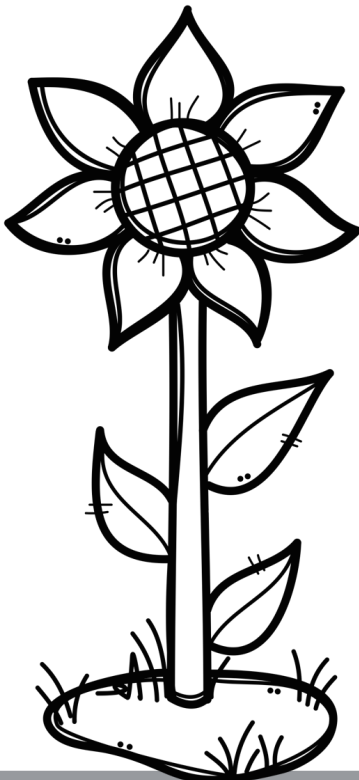
5. Where did Mr. May visit shortly after he retired?

6. What do you think Mr. May did at the end of the story?

Spectacular Sunflowers

The world is filled with a wide variety of flowers, but one of the most amazing flowers of all is the sunflower. Sunflowers are easily recognizable thanks to their extremely tall height, their bright petals, and large dark middles. Sunflowers not only look like the sun; they need a great deal of it to flourish! They thrive with 6-8 hours a day of sunlight. Sunflowers can typically grow up to sixteen feet tall, although the tallest sunflower ever recorded reach a height of 30 feet and one inch. The dark middle of the sunflower is called the head. The head is covered by tiny flowers called florets. Each floret will produce a seed. Sunflower seeds are useful for many reasons. First, they produce more sunflowers. Secondly, they provide food for birds. Many people like to snack on sunflower seeds as well! Did you know that sunflower seeds can also be processed into cooking oil? Sunflowers are not only beautiful; they are useful as well. Sunflowers are spectacular!

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Comprehension Questions: Spectacular Sunflowers

1. Describe what a sunflower looks like.

2. How much sun does a sunflower need every day?

3. What do you think the word flourish means?

4. How tall was the tallest sunflower ever recorded?

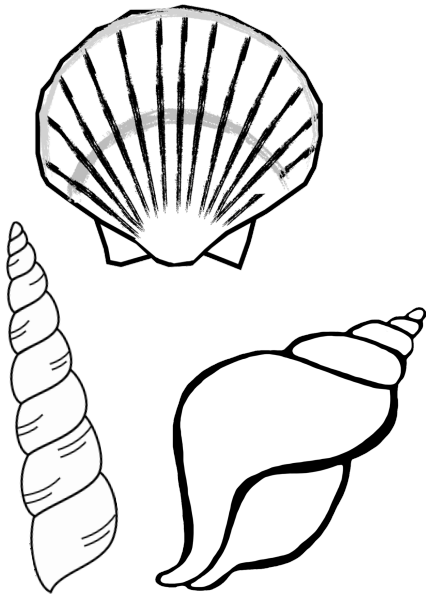
5. Where do sunflower seeds come from?

6. How are sunflowers useful?

Sea Shells on the Sea Shore

When people visit the ocean, there are a wide variety of ||
activities they like to participate in. Some people like physical 2|
activities, like swimming or surfing. Other people like activities 30
that are more docile, like sunbathing or reading on the beach. 4|
There is one activity however that almost everyone loves, and 5|
that is collecting shells. When you walk along the beach, you 62
will find a large assortment of shells glistening in the sun. 73
They seem to call "Pick me up!" Where did the shells come 85
from though? The shells are the discarded exoskeletons of 94
sea creatures like clams, oysters, and mussels. These 102
creatures live inside their shells for protection. Once the 1|
animal dies, the empty shells wash up onto the beach. Shells 122
come in an array of shapes, sizes, colors, textures, and 132
patterns. Collectors enjoy finding diverse shells for their 140
collections, and often use them for crafts, or for decorating 150
at home. 152

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Comprehension Questions: Sea Shells on the Sea Shore

1. What are some physical activities people like participating in at the beach?

2. What do you think the word docile means?

3. What do sea creatures use their shells for?

4. How do shells end up on the beach?

5. How can shells be different from each other?

6. How can people use shells?

The History of Independence Day

Independence Day is a national holiday in America. It is 10
celebrated annually on July 4. Many people participate in July 20
4th festivities, like picnics and fireworks, but not everyone 29
knows the real meaning behind this important holiday. 37

Independence Day is a celebration of the birth of the United 48
States of America as an independent country. Thirteen 56
colonies were established by settlers who left England and the 66
Kingdom of Great Britain. The people who lived in these 76
territories did not think that the British king should have 86
authority over them and they drafted The Declaration of 95
Independence. This document stated that the colonies should 103
be free of British rule and that they planned to establish 114
their own country with their own leaders. The Declaration 123
was adopted on July 4, 1776. During this time, the colonists 134
were at war with Britain. The British lost, and freedom was 145
won! The United States of America was now a country, and 156
the colonists could now call themselves Americans! 163

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Comprehension Questions: The History of Independence Day

1. When is Independence Day celebrated?

2. What are some traditions your family has on Independence Day?

3. What does Independence Day celebrate?

4. What is the Declaration of Independence?

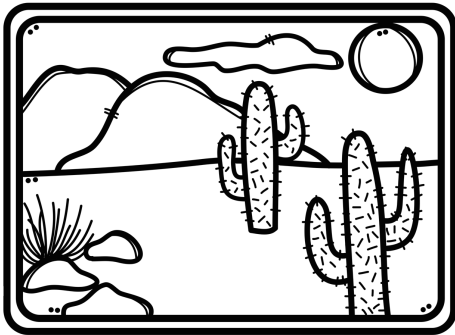
5. Before the United States of America was established, what were the territories called where the settlers lived?

6. How did the colonists win their freedom?

All About the Desert

The world is filled with five unique biomes. These biomes are all very different from each other. They have different climates, different weather, different plant life, and different animals inhabiting them. The five major biomes are: aquatic, grassland, desert, tundra, and forest. Of these biomes, the desert is the driest. A desert is defined as a place where very little precipitation falls, and there is very little vegetation. Many people do not realize that there are both hot and cold deserts. The largest desert in the world is Antarctica. The largest hot desert is the Sahara Desert in Africa. Although it is very hot during the day, it becomes quite chilly when the sun goes down! Plants that live in the desert must be specialized so that they can survive on very little rain. They may have methods for storing water, or they may have extensive root systems. Animals too must have special features to allow them to survive in these extreme conditions. The desert is a unique biome, filled with interesting plants and animals!

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Comprehension Questions: All About the Desert

1. What is a biome?

2. What are the five major biomes?

3. What is the definition of a desert?

4. What is the largest desert in Africa?

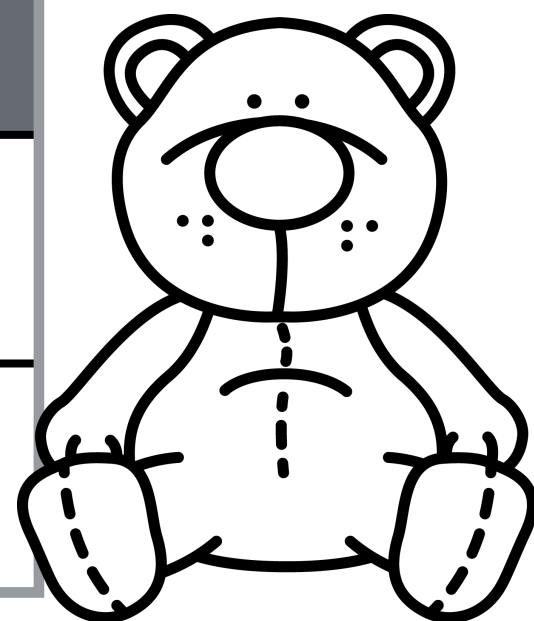
5. What are examples of special features desert plants have?

6. What was something you found surprising in this article?

How a Teddy Bear is Made

Teddy bears come in countless shapes, sizes, colors, and materials. Have you ever stopped to wonder how a teddy bear is made? Making a teddy bear is a very involved process that requires many more steps than you may think. The first thing a teddy bear manufacturer needs to do to create a plush bear is to select the type of fur they will use. Then the fur is stacked into layers. Machines are used to cut the fur into many pieces that will eventually be sewn together to create the finished product. After the pieces are cut, they are sewn either by hand or by machine. The smallest pieces are sewn together first, and then are attached to the head and body. A worker then creates a face for the bear. Next, the bear is sent off to be stuffed. The bear is then sewn completely shut and other details, such as a ribbon, are added. Lastly, the fur is groomed so that the bear looks presentable and for its new home.

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Comprehension Questions: How a Teddy Bear is Made

1. What is the first step in creating a teddy bear?

2. How are the pieces of the teddy bear cut?

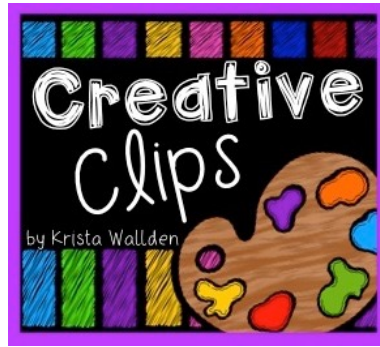
3. What do you think the word plush means?

4. How are the pieces of a teddy bear sewn together?

5. When is the teddy bear stuffed?

6. What is the last step in creating a teddy bear?

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THE BUNDLE

- ✓ BLENDS PACK
- ✓ DIGRAPHS PACK
- ✓ TRIGRAPHS PACK
- ✓ DIPHTHONGS PACK
- ✓ LONG VOWEL PACK
- ✓ SHORT VOWEL PACK
- ✓ R-CONTROLLED VOWELS PACK