# Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills<sup>TM</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> Edition

### **DIBELS**®

# Sixth Grade Scoring Booklet DIBELS® Benchmark Assessment

Edited By:
Roland H. Good III
Ruth A. Kaminski
University of Oregon
Dynamic Measurement Group, Inc.

Available: <a href="http://dibels.uoregon.edu/">http://dibels.uoregon.edu/</a>

#### Instructions:

This packet includes 2 parts: the student response form and student stimulus materials. The student response forms are photocopied back to back and saddle stapled. The same form is used by each student for each benchmark assessment throughout the year. The second part is the reusable student stimulus materials. Make one copy for each person who is doing the benchmark testing. They can be laminated and comb bound for reuse.

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). <u>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills</u> (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu/.

### DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency Short Form Directions

Make sure you have reviewed the long form of the directions in the *DIBELS Administration and Scoring Guide* and have them available. Say these specific directions to the student:

Please read this (point) out loud. If you get stuck, I will tell you the word so you can keep reading. When I say, "stop" I may ask you to tell me about what you read, so do your best reading. Start here (point to the first word of the passage). Begin.

Start your stopwatch when the student says the first word of the passage.

At the end of <u>1 minute</u>, place a bracket (]) after the last word provided by the student, stop and reset the stopwatch, and say,

*Stop.* (remove the passage)

If the student reads more than 10 words correct, proceed with the retell part. Say,

Please tell me all about what you just read. Try to tell me everything you can. Begin. Start your stopwatch after you say "begin."

The first time the student does not say anything for 3 seconds, say "Try to tell me everything you can." This prompt can be used only once.

If the student does not say anything or gets off track for 5 seconds, circle the total number of words in the student's retell and say, "Stop."

At the end of <u>1 minute</u>, circle the total number of words in the student's retell and say, "Stop."

# Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills<sup>TM</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. University of Oregon Sixth Grade Benchmark Assessment

Name:	Teacher:	
School:	District:	

	Benchmark 1 Beginning/Fall	Benchmark 2 Middle/Winter	Benchmark 3 End/Spring
Date			
DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency	(middle score)	(middle score)	(middle score)
Retell Fluency (Optional)	(middle score)	(middle score)	(middle score)

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). <u>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills</u> (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu/.

Revised: 5/13/06

## Benchmark 3.3 (Continued) DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

visited the park wants this paradise to last for as long as possible.	33(
protecting the park's fragile natural features. Everyone who has	31.
visitors to enjoy the park, but they are also committed to	308
working to answer these and similar questions. They want the	.67
The park staff, the Virgin Island government, and others are	.87
ग्रास्थ र	
each year? How many boats should be allowed to anchor in the	770
many people should be allowed to swim in and around the reefs	797
VITRIN ISIANDS INALIONAI PARK (CONLINUED)	

Retell:

180	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
120	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
170	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
06	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
09	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
30	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	$\otimes$

Retell Total:

Total:\_

Notes:

## DIBELS $^{\oplus}$ Oral Reading Fluency

The Grand Canyon

597	growing crops, making pottery, and weaving baskets.
728	pueblos on both rims of the canyon, hunting and fishing,
848	canyon, more than eight hundred years ago. They lived in rock
237	Native Americans were the first to live and work in the
576	braving waters that had never been mapped.
617	He and ten other men traveled down the river in four small boats,
907	Wesley Powell led the first successful trip through the canyon.
961	rolling rapids. Almost two hundred years ago, American John
187	raft trips over smooth water or weeklong trips that include
LLI	mule, or by raft on the Colorado River. Visitors can take daylong
591	The only ways to reach the inner canyon are by foot, on
123	but is open only six months of the year.
144	visitors. The North Rim is cooler and quieter than the South Rim
137	popular hiking trail. The South Rim is open year round to
171	are hotels and many trails to explore. Bright Angel Trail is a
601	Most tourists visit the South Rim of the canyon, where there
86	are the result of traces of different minerals.
06	back millions of years. The reds, pinks, and yellows in the rock
8 <i>L</i>	Canyon is walled by colorful strata, or layers, of rock dating
<i>L</i> 9	Among the world's great tourist attractions, the Grand
65	northwestern Arizona.
LS	gorge carved over millions of years by the Colorado River in
97	Grand Canyon, you're right. The Grand Canyon is an enormous
98	more than ten miles wide at some points. If you guessed the
77	more than a mile deep and almost three hundred miles long, and
15	What is one of the world's biggest holes in the ground? It's

### Benchmark 3.3 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

#### Virgin Islands National Park

Another name for Virgin Islands National Park might be paradise. The park, which covers much of St. John Island and most of Hassel Island, consists of fifteen thousand acres of clear water, white sand beaches, fragile coral reefs, tropical forests, hundreds of species of plants, and the remnants of earlier cultures.

The coral reef colonies here support many types of fish. They are also home to worms, sponges, urchins, mollusks, and lobsters. These are fragile communities that depend on just the right combination of conditions such as proper temperatures, enough sunlight and oxygen, and the right foods.

The park features several different land areas. These areas

106
were created by differences in rainfall amounts, soil types, and
varying effects of salt and wind. Along the north shoreline and
the higher interior elevations are wet forests that receive a lot of
rain each year. These areas support tall trees and lush forests.

106

117

Dry forests cover the eastern and southern parts of St. John,
as well as some of the low coastal areas. Mangrove forests are
also found in the park. Mangrove trees have adapted to
183
conditions on the shorelines. Red mangroves even grow in the
ocean, and their roots protect the shorelines and shelter marine
animals.
204

Protection of the reefs and forests of this park present a 215 challenge for the park service. More than one million people 225 visit the park each year. People have a right to visit the park. But 239 how many visitors should be in the park at any given time? How 252

### Benchmark 1.1 (Continued) DIBELS<sup>®</sup> Oral Reading Fluency

### The Grand Canyon (Continued)

Wildlife is abundant in the canyon. Hundreds of kinds of
birds live there, as well as bighorn sheep, mule deer, beavers,
bats, snakes, lizards, and frogs. There are also many types of
trees, cacti, and wildflowers.

275
286
297
297
298

You can see that the Grand Canyon is much more than just a
big hole in the ground. It is an amazing site, alive with stories of
the past and present that are written on the rock, on the land, and
on the river.

314
328
345

Total:

#### Retell:

9

20

31

40

50

51

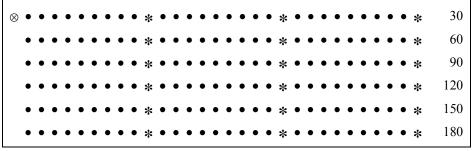
62

71

81

89

97



Retell Total:

Notes:

### Benchmark 3.2 (Continued) DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

	_	
(Continued)	ın Danger (	Mountains

Taken as a whole, the problem seems as large as the mountains themselves. But each mountain system is unique. For one country, a threat to a mountain range may be the pressures of war, but for another, it may be unsound farming. People will need to address the problems as separate issues, one step at a already taking steps in some mountain. Scientists and other groups are already taking steps in some mountain areas. They know that planet.

Total:\_

331

330

318

308

*L*67

582

*71t* 

197

727

| Ketell:

Retell Total:

Notes:

© 2003 Dynamic Measurement Group, Inc.

### BELS® Oral Reading Fluency

Fossil Butte National Monument

## If you visit Fossil Butte National Monument in Wyoming, you may meet a fish that is fifty million years old. The park was

established to preserve the rock formations that contain a wide

variety of fossil remains of plants and animals from a lake that covered the area long ago. The fossils are so well preserved that

scientists can use them to study relationships among the plants and animals. Scientists can also use the fossils to study the

effects of climate change in the area.

Fossil Lake, now a dry bed, was once more than fifty miles long and twenty miles wide at its maximum. The lake and its

surrounding area were alive with gars, stingrays, herring, perch, crocodiles, turtles, insects, and horses the size of dogs.

Scientists aren't sure why so much of the lake's life was preserved as fossils. One theory is that plants and animals that sank to the bottom of the lake were quickly covered with a

saint to the bottom of the that protected them. Scientists can also tell that a great number of fish were killed suddenly, but no one

has yet solved this mystery.

Fossil Butte is a high desert, with hot, sunny summers and cool nights and cold winters. It usually has perfect weather for

hiking. It is easy to get out of breath as you hike, though, because it is so far above sea level. You're likely to see mule

deer and a variety of birds in the park. If you're lucky, you might

also see elk, moose, and beaver.

You can explore the park on your own or with a ranger.

There are two groomed hiking trails in the park. A research

© 2003 Dynamic Measurement Group, Inc.

087

697

LS7

157 237

774

117

700

68 I

184

ILI

191

6†I

138

171

811

60 I

*L*6

58

8*L* 

*L*9

LS

54

EE

23

### Benchmark 3.2 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

### Mountains in Danger

People often go to mountains for relief from the pressures of modern life. The altitude, fresh air, and scenery can revive 21 sagging spirits. But where do mountains go for relief from 31 pressures of their own? 35

Many of the world's mountain regions are suffering from damage caused by modern life. They have been affected by climate changes, tourism, pollution, development, and other forces. Unless these forces are controlled, major problems will result. For example, erosion caused by unwise farming practices can lead to landslides, avalanches, and flooding.

Mountains and highlands cover a quarter of the earth's land surface. These areas are home to ten percent of the world's people. They provide a source of water for more than half of all people. These ecosystems are as important to the planet as are its oceans and rain forests.

Mining, logging, and overgrazing of farmlands have

destroyed forests in mountain and highland areas. To some

researchers, however, tourism is one of the main threats. The

number of visitors to mountain areas is growing. More tourism

means more development and more vehicle traffic. Increased

development destroys wildlife habitats and taxes natural

187

resources.

Along with these problems are threats posed by climate

197
warming trends. Glaciers and snowcaps are melting at an

206
alarming pace, which can lead to even more warming. When the
ice melts, the newly exposed land and water surfaces retain more
228
heat. The warmer land and water can speed up warming around
the world.

241

### Benchmark 1.2 (Continued) DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

Fossil Butte National Monument (Continued)
quarry, located on one of the trails, is open to the public. Here
visitors can help the park staff excavate fossils. And here is
where you might meet your fish, its skeleton, teeth, scales, and
skin perfectly preserved and ready to tell you an ancient story.

326

Total:\_\_\_\_

Retell:

44

54

61

70

79

86

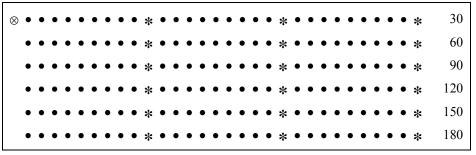
96

107

120

132

136



Retell Total:

Notes:

### Benchmark 3.1 (Continued) DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

330	back to their neighborhood.
376	must have thanked Lamont twenty times during the boys' ride
316	slowly placed the helmet on his head and got on the bike. He
303	blinked in disbelief. "I mean it," Lamont said. "It's yours." Jay
	Winner of the Race (Continued)



Retell Total:

Total:

Notes:

### Benchmark 1.3 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

xample of a good stretching exercise is to sit on the ground with
ody, which helps you avoid injuries during a tennis game. One
Stretching to warm up helps loosen the muscles of your
ractice exercises, and cross training.
mportant are warming up before and after playing, doing
he good manners of tennis. Three other things that are just as
o serve and return the ball, and, of course, tennis etiquette, or
robably know the basics by now, such as the rules of play, ways
ou've discovered the game of tennis and enjoy playing, you
Tennis is one of the most popular sports in the world. If
Training for Tennis

Practice exercises will help you improve your speed and reaction time for tennis. An example of a good practice exercise is to stand a few feet away from a partner and throw each other a tennis ball at the same time. You have to aim carefully and throw underarm for this exercise. If this seems too easy, try clapping or turning around before you eatch the ball

seconds, relax, and then repeat the stretch three more times.

backs of your knees on the ground, reach for your toes or as

your legs straight out in front of you. While trying to keep the

close to your toes as possible. Hold this stretch for about twenty

turning around before you catch the ball.

Cross training has to do with engaging in a sport other than your favorite sport. The theory behind cross training is that

participation in other sports helps tune your body for your main sport.

For example, if you're a tennis player, playing soccer or basketball can improve your coordination and strengthen your

basketball can improve your coordination and strengthen your leg muscles for moving quickly around the tennis court. Swimming and jogging can increase your endurance so that you don't tire out too quickly in a tennis match.

305

567

283

*71d* 

797 729 722

777

734

777

512

503

061

SLI

79 I

SSI

571

133

170

**L01** 

**7**6

£8

89

69

Lt

32

77 15

### Benchmark 3.1 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

#### Winner of the Race

On the day of the race, Lamont awoke early and checked all the equipment on his bicycle one final time. He had owned several bikes over the years, but this one, a red and silver road bike, was his favorite because he'd won the past two Town River races on it. The bicycle race was an annual event for teenagers, and this year the prize would be a new bicycle and helmet.

Lamont's neighbor and friend Jay walked with Lamont to the race site. The two had ridden bicycles together for the past three years, until six months ago, when Jay's bike had been stolen from his garage.

At the site, Jay wished Lamont good luck after the announcer called the race entrants to the starting line. When the fifty or so participants assembled behind the line, the mayor stepped up to the microphone to welcome the contestants and observers. Then he blew a whistle and the cyclists charged across the starting line.

Lamont hung back to let the first wave of riders sort themselves out. Then he began his progress toward the front of the pack, pacing himself and holding back a little to conserve energy for the final push.

Lamont passed one cyclist after another, moving cunningly and steadily to the front, concentrating intently. Soon he passed the lead cyclist and then, to ensure his lead, he churned his legs harder to put distance between himself and the rider in second place. When Lamont rolled across the finish line, the crowd whooped and cheered. 256

After the awards ceremony, as Jay admired the prize, Lamont 266 said, "I want you to have the new bike. I don't want to part with 281 my old bike, which has seen me through three victories." Jay 292

### Benchmark 1.3 (Continued) DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

Training for Tennis (Continued)

Another benefit of cross training is that it puts some variety in your sports life. If you focus all of your attention on tennis, you risk tiring of the sport too quickly. Variety in training will help you maintain your excitement about tennis, or any other sport.

Total:

Retell:

12

23

36

48

60

72

82

94

105

108

119

132

142

151

162

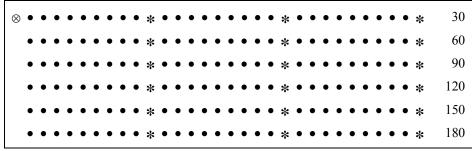
163

174

185

196

201



Retell Total:

Notes:

### Benchmark 2.3 (Continued) DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

### Louise Erdrich (Continued)

American themes, and she has been praised for telling "real stories" about Mative Americans. Her books of fiction and poetry have won numerous awards and prizes. Now a famous writer, Louise receives far more than a nickel for every story she writes.

Retell:

180	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
120	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
170	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
06	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
09	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
30	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	$\otimes$

Retell Total:

Total:

351

**60£** 

667

687

Notes:

### BELS<sup>®</sup> Oral Reading Fluency

оүм т	childrer	the	gnittiz	pabys	SBW	Carlos	'uoou	afterr
			MO	yainb	the F	Over		

One rainy

live next door, Maria and Aldo. The three had played two board games, eaten a snack, and read a story about a mouse and a whale that become friends.

As he watched the rain soak the front yard, Aldo announced that he was bored, and his sister, who usually agreed with Aldo

except when it came to sharing a cookie, chimed in that she too

was bored.

At last the rain stopped and Aldo, who was watching the sun emerge from the clouds, suddenly spied a rainbow. He asked Carlos whether the stories about finding gold at the end of a rainbow were true, to which Carlos responded that he wasn't so

sure. After much persuading from the children, Carlos agreed to

take them on a walk to investigate the rainbow's end.
"When we find gold, I'm going to buy a new bike," Aldo
shouted assuredly as he strode ahead of the others. After a while,

Carlos saw Aldo stop and squat down to pick up a black object, and when Carlos and Maria caught up with Aldo, they saw that he'd found a wallet. Carlos unfolded the wallet, pulled out a card, and saw a name he recognized. The three walked a couple

of blocks to a small white house where Carlos rang the bell and a woman named Mrs. Dale appeared at the door.

Mrs. Dale recognized Carlos, who introduced Aldo and

Maria, and then handed Mrs. Dale the wallet. "Aldo found your husband's wallet on the street," he explained. Mrs. Dale examined the wallet for a moment and then smiled gratefully.

"How kind of you," she said, and then told the three to wait while she went inside for a moment. When she returned, she

counted out four gold dollar coins for each of them.

70£

572 586

597

724

235

*L*77

201

061

87 I

ς9I

123

ItI

131

171

110

86

9*L* 

 $\tau L$ 

19

67

38

34

17

### Benchmark 2.3 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

#### Louise Erdrich

How does a writer become a writer? For author Louise Erdrich, family played an important role. The oldest of seven children, Louise was born fifty years ago to an American Indian mother and a German American father.

She was influenced by the stories she was immersed in through her family and community. "People in [Native American] families make everything into a story," she has said. "People just sit and the stories start coming, one after another. I suppose that when you grow up constantly hearing the stories rise, break and fall, it gets into you somehow." Louise has integrated many of these stories and traditions into her novels.

She began writing when she was a child. Her father
encouraged Louise and her sisters to write original stories. "My
father used to give me a nickel for every story I wrote," says
Louise. Her mother created book covers for the stories. "So at an
early age, I felt myself to be a published author." As a teenager,
Louise began thinking that she might want to become a writer, so
she started keeping a journal and reading poetry.

118

During her junior year of college, Louise won a national poetry prize. After college, she taught writing and also worked at a variety of jobs, including being a waitress, weeding beet crops, and weighing trucks on an interstate highway. These jobs and the people she met through them gave her a deeper understanding of the human experience and have informed many of her stories.

Louise had published two books of poetry before writing her first novel, *Love Medicine*, which quickly became a bestseller. 269

Love Medicine and several other of her books explore Native 279

### Benchmark 2.1 (Continued) DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

Over the Rainbow (Continued)

The three thanked Mrs. Dale and then set out for home,
chattering excitedly among themselves. "It's true about the
rainbow," Aldo said, smiling and opening his hand to reveal the
coins. "There really is gold at the end of the rainbow!"

318
326
337

Total:

Retell:

10

20

31

37

47

55

65

77

87

98

108

196

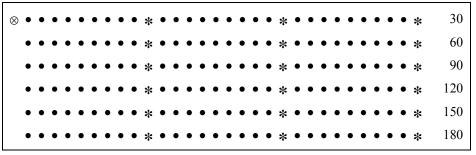
207

218

229

240

250



Retell Total:

Notes:

## Benchmark 2.2 (Continued) DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

Moral: A liar deceives no one but himself.
the shore.
mouse splashed down into the water, the dolphin was far from
water, sending his passenger flying into the air. By the time the
made the dolphin so annoyed that he made a great leap out of the
telling lies about himself to exaggerate his importance. This
The dolphin suddenly realized that the mouse had been
The Mouse and the Dolphin (Continued)

Total:\_

180	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
120	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
150	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
06	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
09	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
30	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	$\otimes$

Retell Total:

:sətoN

Retell:

## $\frac{\text{Benchmark } 2.2}{\text{Oral Reading Fluency}}$

567	of mine, and related to our family!"
987	Rhodes? Why, of course I do. He's an old college acquaintance
575	Roads was the name of a person, Abe replied, "Do I know
597	Not wishing to appear ignorant, and assuming that Herring
724	familiar with Herring Roads?"
720	referring to the name of the bay, asked, "I suppose you're
533	Just then the two entered a large bay, and the dolphin,
228	fellow," said the dolphin with admiration.
777	the dolphin listened intently. "You're a very distinguished
714	Naturally, Abe couldn't resist telling his fantastic stories, and
502	toward shore.
203	fin under Abe and flipped him onto his back, and off they went
160	the mouse accepted this proposition, the dolphin reached with a
180	dolphin, who offered to transport Abe ashore on his back. After
69 I	Just as Ade was about to adandon hope, along came a
128	began treading water and was soon feeling desperate and alone.
148	stranded in the middle of the ocean, many miles from shore. He
136	him off the deck of his boat and into the sea. Abe found himself
155	The day after Abe set sail, a great storm arose and washed
110	king.
601	explained proudly that he would sail to Spain to be advisor to the
96	passersby inquired what Abe planned to do with the boat, he
82	One day Abe began constructing a boat on the beach. When
t/L	stolen from him.
IL	he who'd invented the sailing compass, but the idea had been
09	once been governor of a vast island across the sea and that it was
97	about himself. For instance, he bragged to others that he had
32	of size by exaggerating his strengths and even telling tall tales
77	small creature bothered Abe, so he tried to make up for his lack
Π	A mouse named Abe lived near the ocean. Being such a
	The Mouse and the Dolphin

# Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills<sup>TM</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> Edition

### **DIBELS**®

# Sixth Grade Student Materials DIBELS® Benchmark Assessment

Edited By:
Roland H. Good III
Ruth A. Kaminski
University of Oregon
Dynamic Measurement Group, Inc.

Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu

#### **Instructions**:

These are reusable student stimulus materials. Make one copy for each person who is doing the benchmark testing. They can be laminated and comb bound for reuse.

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). <u>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills</u> (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu/.

Revised: 5/13/06

#### The Grand Canyon

What is one of the world's biggest holes in the ground? It's more than a mile deep and almost three hundred miles long, and more than ten miles wide at some points. If you guessed the Grand Canyon, you're right. The Grand Canyon is an enormous gorge carved over millions of years by the Colorado River in northwestern Arizona.

Among the world's great tourist attractions, the Grand Canyon is walled by colorful strata, or layers, of rock dating back millions of years. The reds, pinks, and yellows in the rock are the result of traces of different minerals.

Most tourists visit the South Rim of the canyon, where there are hotels and many trails to explore. Bright Angel Trail is a popular hiking trail. The South Rim is open year round to visitors. The North Rim is cooler and quieter than the South Rim but is open only six months of the year.

The only ways to reach the inner canyon are by foot, on mule, or by raft on the Colorado River. Visitors can take daylong raft trips over smooth water or weeklong trips that include rolling rapids. Almost two hundred years ago, American John Wesley Powell led the first successful trip through the canyon. He and ten other men traveled down the river in four small boats, braving waters that had never been mapped.

Native Americans were the first to live and work in the canyon, more than eight hundred years ago. They lived in rock pueblos on both rims of the canyon, hunting and fishing, growing crops, making pottery, and weaving baskets.

Wildlife is abundant in the canyon. Hundreds of kinds of birds live there, as well as bighorn sheep, mule deer, beavers, bats, snakes, lizards, and frogs. There are also many types of trees, cacti, and wildflowers.

You can see that the Grand Canyon is much more than just a big hole in the ground. It is an amazing site, alive with stories of the past and present that are written on the rock, on the land, and on the river.

#### Fossil Butte National Monument

If you visit Fossil Butte National Monument in Wyoming, you may meet a fish that is fifty million years old. The park was established to preserve the rock formations that contain a wide variety of fossil remains of plants and animals from a lake that covered the area long ago. The fossils are so well preserved that scientists can use them to study relationships among the plants and animals. Scientists can also use the fossils to study the effects of climate change in the area.

Fossil Lake, now a dry bed, was once more than fifty miles long and twenty miles wide at its maximum. The lake and its surrounding area were alive with gars, stingrays, herring, perch, crocodiles, turtles, insects, and horses the size of dogs.

Scientists aren't sure why so much of the lake's life was preserved as fossils. One theory is that plants and animals that sank to the bottom of the lake were quickly covered with a substance in the water that protected them. Scientists can also tell that a great number of fish were killed suddenly, but no one has yet solved this mystery.

Fossil Butte is a high desert, with hot, sunny summers and cool nights and cold winters. It usually has perfect weather for hiking. It is easy to get out of breath as you hike, though, because it is so far above sea level. You're likely to see mule deer and a variety of birds in the park. If you're lucky, you might also see elk, moose, and beaver.

You can explore the park on your own or with a ranger. There are two groomed hiking trails in the park. A research quarry, located on one of the trails, is open to the public. Here visitors can help the park staff excavate fossils. And here is where you might meet your fish, its skeleton, teeth, scales, and skin perfectly preserved and ready to tell you an ancient story.

#### Training for Tennis

Tennis is one of the most popular sports in the world. If you've discovered the game of tennis and enjoy playing, you probably know the basics by now, such as the rules of play, ways to serve and return the ball, and, of course, tennis etiquette, or the good manners of tennis. Three other things that are just as important are warming up before and after playing, doing practice exercises, and cross training.

Stretching to warm up helps loosen the muscles of your body, which helps you avoid injuries during a tennis game. One example of a good stretching exercise is to sit on the ground with your legs straight out in front of you. While trying to keep the backs of your knees on the ground, reach for your toes or as close to your toes as possible. Hold this stretch for about twenty seconds, relax, and then repeat the stretch three more times.

Practice exercises will help you improve your speed and reaction time for tennis. An example of a good practice exercise is to stand a few feet away from a partner and throw each other a tennis ball at the same time. You have to aim carefully and throw underarm for this exercise. If this seems too easy, try clapping or turning around before you catch the ball.

Cross training has to do with engaging in a sport other than your favorite sport. The theory behind cross training is that participation in other sports helps tune your body for your main sport.

For example, if you're a tennis player, playing soccer or basketball can improve your coordination and strengthen your leg muscles for moving quickly around the tennis court. Swimming and jogging can increase your endurance so that you don't tire out too quickly in a tennis match.

Another benefit of cross training is that it puts some variety in your sports life. If you focus all of your attention on tennis, you risk tiring of the sport too quickly. Variety in training will help you maintain your excitement about tennis, or any other sport.

#### Over the Rainbow

One rainy afternoon, Carlos was babysitting the children who live next door, Maria and Aldo. The three had played two board games, eaten a snack, and read a story about a mouse and a whale that become friends.

As he watched the rain soak the front yard, Aldo announced that he was bored, and his sister, who usually agreed with Aldo except when it came to sharing a cookie, chimed in that she too was bored.

At last the rain stopped and Aldo, who was watching the sun emerge from the clouds, suddenly spied a rainbow. He asked Carlos whether the stories about finding gold at the end of a rainbow were true, to which Carlos responded that he wasn't so sure. After much persuading from the children, Carlos agreed to take them on a walk to investigate the rainbow's end.

"When we find gold, I'm going to buy a new bike," Aldo shouted assuredly as he strode ahead of the others. After a while, Carlos saw Aldo stop and squat down to pick up a black object, and when Carlos and Maria caught up with Aldo, they saw that he'd found a wallet. Carlos unfolded the wallet, pulled out a card, and saw a name he recognized. The three walked a couple of blocks to a small white house where Carlos rang the bell and a woman named Mrs. Dale appeared at the door.

Mrs. Dale recognized Carlos, who introduced Aldo and Maria, and then handed Mrs. Dale the wallet. "Aldo found your husband's wallet on the street," he explained. Mrs. Dale examined the wallet for a moment and then smiled gratefully.

"How kind of you," she said, and then told the three to wait while she went inside for a moment. When she returned, she counted out four gold dollar coins for each of them.

The three thanked Mrs. Dale and then set out for home, chattering excitedly among themselves. "It's true about the rainbow," Aldo said, smiling and opening his hand to reveal the coins. "There really is gold at the end of the rainbow!"

#### The Mouse and the Dolphin

A mouse named Abe lived near the ocean. Being such a small creature bothered Abe, so he tried to make up for his lack of size by exaggerating his strengths and even telling tall tales about himself. For instance, he bragged to others that he had once been governor of a vast island across the sea and that it was he who'd invented the sailing compass, but the idea had been stolen from him.

One day Abe began constructing a boat on the beach. When passersby inquired what Abe planned to do with the boat, he explained proudly that he would sail to Spain to be advisor to the king.

The day after Abe set sail, a great storm arose and washed him off the deck of his boat and into the sea. Abe found himself stranded in the middle of the ocean, many miles from shore. He began treading water and was soon feeling desperate and alone.

Just as Abe was about to abandon hope, along came a dolphin, who offered to transport Abe ashore on his back. After the mouse accepted this proposition, the dolphin reached with a fin under Abe and flipped him onto his back, and off they went toward shore.

Naturally, Abe couldn't resist telling his fantastic stories, and the dolphin listened intently. "You're a very distinguished fellow," said the dolphin with admiration.

Just then the two entered a large bay, and the dolphin, referring to the name of the bay, asked, "I suppose you're familiar with Herring Roads?"

Not wishing to appear ignorant, and assuming that Herring Roads was the name of a person, Abe replied, "Do I know Rhodes? Why, of course I do. He's an old college acquaintance of mine, and related to our family!"

The dolphin suddenly realized that the mouse had been telling lies about himself to exaggerate his importance. This made the dolphin so annoyed that he made a great leap out of the water, sending his passenger flying into the air. By the time the mouse splashed down into the water, the dolphin was far from the shore.

Moral: A liar deceives no one but himself

#### Louise Erdrich

How does a writer become a writer? For author Louise Erdrich, family played an important role. The oldest of seven children, Louise was born fifty years ago to an American Indian mother and a German American father.

She was influenced by the stories she was immersed in through her family and community. "People in [Native American] families make everything into a story," she has said. "People just sit and the stories start coming, one after another. I suppose that when you grow up constantly hearing the stories rise, break and fall, it gets into you somehow." Louise has integrated many of these stories and traditions into her novels.

She began writing when she was a child. Her father encouraged Louise and her sisters to write original stories. "My father used to give me a nickel for every story I wrote," says Louise. Her mother created book covers for the stories. "So at an early age, I felt myself to be a published author." As a teenager, Louise began thinking that she might want to become a writer, so she started keeping a journal and reading poetry.

During her junior year of college, Louise won a national poetry prize. After college, she taught writing and also worked at a variety of jobs, including being a waitress, weeding beet crops, and weighing trucks on an interstate highway. These jobs and the people she met through them gave her a deeper understanding of the human experience and have informed many of her stories.

Louise had published two books of poetry before writing her first novel, *Love Medicine*, which quickly became a bestseller. *Love Medicine* and several other of her books explore Native American themes, and she has been praised for telling "real stories" about Native Americans. Her books of fiction and poetry have won numerous awards and prizes. Now a famous writer, Louise receives far more than a nickel for every story she writes.

#### Winner of the Race

On the day of the race, Lamont awoke early and checked all the equipment on his bicycle one final time. He had owned several bikes over the years, but this one, a red and silver road bike, was his favorite because he'd won the past two Town River races on it. The bicycle race was an annual event for teenagers, and this year the prize would be a new bicycle and helmet.

Lamont's neighbor and friend Jay walked with Lamont to the race site. The two had ridden bicycles together for the past three years, until six months ago, when Jay's bike had been stolen from his garage.

At the site, Jay wished Lamont good luck after the announcer called the race entrants to the starting line. When the fifty or so participants assembled behind the line, the mayor stepped up to the microphone to welcome the contestants and observers. Then he blew a whistle and the cyclists charged across the starting line.

Lamont hung back to let the first wave of riders sort themselves out. Then he began his progress toward the front of the pack, pacing himself and holding back a little to conserve energy for the final push.

Lamont passed one cyclist after another, moving cunningly and steadily to the front, concentrating intently. Soon he passed the lead cyclist and then, to ensure his lead, he churned his legs harder to put distance between himself and the rider in second place. When Lamont rolled across the finish line, the crowd whooped and cheered.

After the awards ceremony, as Jay admired the prize, Lamont said, "I want you to have the new bike. I don't want to part with my old bike, which has seen me through three victories." Jay blinked in disbelief. "I mean it," Lamont said. "It's yours." Jay slowly placed the helmet on his head and got on the bike. He must have thanked Lamont twenty times during the boys' ride back to their neighborhood.

#### Mountains in Danger

People often go to mountains for relief from the pressures of modern life. The altitude, fresh air, and scenery can revive sagging spirits. But where do mountains go for relief from pressures of their own?

Many of the world's mountain regions are suffering from damage caused by modern life. They have been affected by climate changes, tourism, pollution, development, and other forces. Unless these forces are controlled, major problems will result. For example, erosion caused by unwise farming practices can lead to landslides, avalanches, and flooding.

Mountains and highlands cover a quarter of the earth's land surface. These areas are home to ten percent of the world's people. They provide a source of water for more than half of all people. These ecosystems are as important to the planet as are its oceans and rain forests.

Mining, logging, and overgrazing of farmlands have destroyed forests in mountain and highland areas. To some researchers, however, tourism is one of the main threats. The number of visitors to mountain areas is growing. More tourism means more development and more vehicle traffic. Increased development destroys wildlife habitats and taxes natural resources.

Along with these problems are threats posed by climate warming trends. Glaciers and snowcaps are melting at an alarming pace, which can lead to even more warming. When the ice melts, the newly exposed land and water surfaces retain more heat. The warmer land and water can speed up warming around the world.

Taken as a whole, the problem seems as large as the mountains themselves. But each mountain system is unique. For one country, a threat to a mountain range may be the pressures of war, but for another, it may be unsound farming. People will need to address the problems as separate issues, one step at a time, as in climbing a mountain. Scientists and other groups are already taking steps in some mountain areas. They know that making a mountain healthier is good for the health of the whole planet.

#### Virgin Islands National Park

Another name for Virgin Islands National Park might be paradise. The park, which covers much of St. John Island and most of Hassel Island, consists of fifteen thousand acres of clear water, white sand beaches, fragile coral reefs, tropical forests, hundreds of species of plants, and the remnants of earlier cultures.

The coral reef colonies here support many types of fish. They are also home to worms, sponges, urchins, mollusks, and lobsters. These are fragile communities that depend on just the right combination of conditions such as proper temperatures, enough sunlight and oxygen, and the right foods.

The park features several different land areas. These areas were created by differences in rainfall amounts, soil types, and varying effects of salt and wind. Along the north shoreline and the higher interior elevations are wet forests that receive a lot of rain each year. These areas support tall trees and lush forests.

Dry forests cover the eastern and southern parts of St. John, as well as some of the low coastal areas. Mangrove forests are also found in the park. Mangrove trees have adapted to conditions on the shorelines. Red mangroves even grow in the ocean, and their roots protect the shorelines and shelter marine animals.

Protection of the reefs and forests of this park present a challenge for the park service. More than one million people visit the park each year. People have a right to visit the park. But how many visitors should be in the park at any given time? How many people should be allowed to swim in and around the reefs each year? How many boats should be allowed to anchor in the area?

The park staff, the Virgin Island government, and others are working to answer these and similar questions. They want the visitors to enjoy the park, but they are also committed to protecting the park's fragile natural features. Everyone who has visited the park wants this paradise to last for as long as possible.