

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ 6th Edition

DIBELS™

Progress Monitoring DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency Fourth Grade Scoring Booklet

Edited By:

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Ruth A. Kaminski

University of Oregon

Available:

<http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>

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). Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (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 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 **1 minute**, 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.

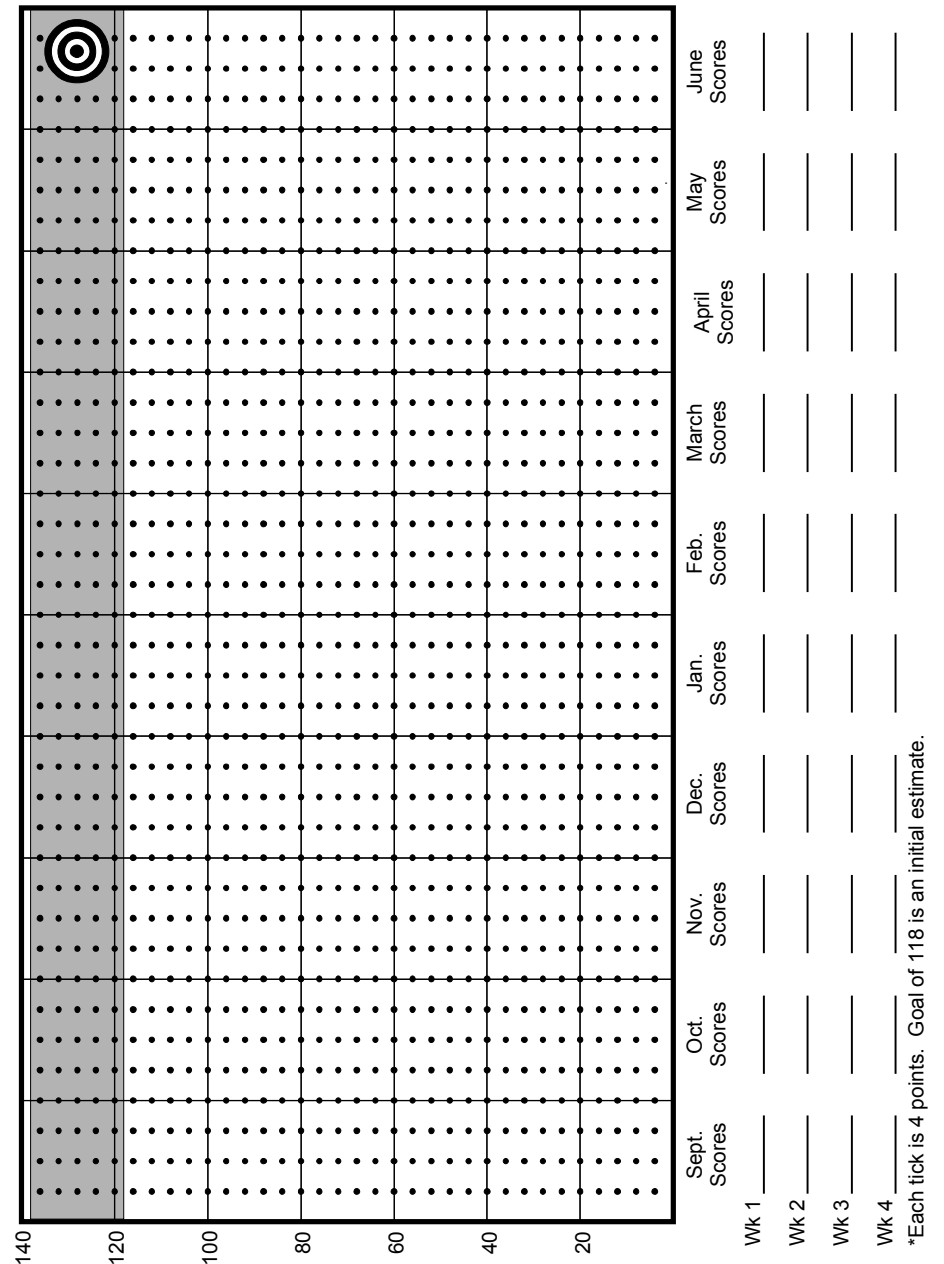
If the student does not say anything or gets off track for 5 seconds, circle the total number of words in the student’s retell and say, ***“Stop.”***

At the end of **1 minute**, circle the total number of words in the student’s retell and say, ***“Stop.”***

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University of Oregon
Fourth Grade – DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency

Name: _____ Teacher: _____



The Bakery

10 Light crept through the bedroom window and woke Josh up.

23 At first he was a bit disoriented and did not recognize the room,

33 but he quickly remembered where he was. Yesterday had been

41 moving day, and this was his new home.

50 “Today, I’ll explore my new neighborhood and, with any

59 luck, I’ll make some friends,” he said to himself.

70 Josh jumped out of bed and pushed open the window. He

81 stretched and took a long, deep breath, and that’s when he

92 noticed it. The air was filled with the most wonderful aroma.

103 “I’ve got to find out where that incredibly delicious smell is

114 coming from!” exclaimed Josh, as he threw on his clothes and

118 ran down the stairs.

128 In the kitchen, his stepmother and dad were conversing about

135 their plans for the day over breakfast.

143 “Did you notice that wonderful aroma?” his stepmother

144 asked.

152 “Absolutely,” replied Josh, “and I’m going to investigate

162 where it’s coming from as soon as I finish breakfast.”

173 “That’s not necessary,” Dad said, “because I can tell you it’s

186 the smell of fresh bread from a nearby bakery. In fact, I bought

197 these breakfast muffins there just a little while ago. You should

208 stop by and introduce yourself. Mr. Lee, the baker, really wants

213 you to meet his son.”

223 After he had devoured his breakfast, Josh ambled down the

235 sidewalk toward the bakery. He found it at the corner where his

246 street intersected the main road. Inside the bakery, Josh saw a

Progress Monitoring Probe 1 (Continued)
DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency

The Bakery (Continued)

counter where loaves of bread were stacked along side muffins, 256
cookies, and sweet rolls. They all smelled and looked 265
mouthwateringly delicious. 267

Mr. Lee came out and welcomed Josh to the bakery. After 278
they chatted for a while, he introduced Josh to Young-Ho, his 289
son. The two boys began talking and soon found they had many 301
things in common. Young-ho offered to show Josh around the 311
neighborhood, and they spent the morning roaming around 319
together. 320

Josh headed home for lunch with a good feeling. He had, 331
indeed, made a new friend, and what could be better than waking 343
up each day to the smell of fresh-baked bread? He couldn't wait 356
to learn more about his new neighborhood and meet more 366
friends. 367

ORF Total: _____

Retell:

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Retell Total: _____

Notes:

Progress Monitoring Probe 20 (Continued)
DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency

Special Olympics (Continued)

In communities around the world, Special Olympics makes a difference in people's lives. The purpose behind Special Olympics might best be summed up by its oath: "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt." 315
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ORF Total: _____

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Retell Total: _____

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Progress Monitoring Probe 2
DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency

The Woodman and the Lost Ax

A Woodman was chopping wood beside a deep, blue lake. He whistled as he chopped, happy to work in such a beautiful place. Without warning, he stumbled over a root and lost his balance. When he reached to steady himself, his axe slipped from his hand and into the depths of the lake. The Woodman tried desperately to recover the axe, but he was unsuccessful. Recognizing that his means of earning a livelihood was lost, the Woodman began moaning in desperation.

Just then, Mercury, the messenger of the gods, appeared and asked the Woodman why he was despondent. After the

Woodman described what had happened, Mercury plunged into the lake and retrieved a gleaming, golden axe.

"Is this the axe you lost?" demanded Mercury.

The Woodman assured him it was not, and Mercury disappeared beneath the surface again. Soon he returned with a silver axe in his hand.

"Is this the axe you lost?" demanded Mercury. The Woodman said it was not, and Mercury dove beneath the surface yet again. This time, he returned with the Woodman's axe.

"That's it!" exclaimed the Woodman. He embraced Mercury and thanked him profusely. Mercury was impressed with the Woodman's honesty, so he presented him with the golden and silver axes, as well as the one he had lost.

When the Woodman returned home that evening, he told his coworkers what had happened. One of them decided he wanted to experience similar good fortune. He hurried to the lake and threw his axe into it. Then he sat down beside the lake and pretended to cry. As before, Mercury appeared and inquired why

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Progress Monitoring Probe 20
DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency

Special Olympics

Forty years ago, Eunice Shriver, started a sports camp. It was for children with disabilities. She held the day camp at her home. For the next five years, she helped start similar camps all around the country. A few years later she started Special Olympics, a program of year-round sports training and athletic contests for people with disabilities.

Today, Special Olympics serves about one million people. There are branches in hundreds of countries. The program helps both children and adults improve their physical fitness. It also helps them build self-confidence and it is just plain fun. Once you see the joy of participating on a young athlete's face, you are likely to be hooked.

The Special Olympics offers sports for each season. During fall, athletes practice long-distance running and walking. They also bowl and play volleyball. In winter, they practice skiing and ice skating. Spring sports include soccer, diving, swimming, and cycling. In summer, athletes play tennis, softball, and golf.

Athletes never pay fees to compete in or practice sports. Coaches and helpers give their time freely. Family members and friends of athletes also help out in many ways. Money is raised by community groups. The money is used to sponsor events, buy medals, pay for sports gear, and so forth.

Every two years, Special Olympics holds World Games. Leading athletes from many countries compete in different sports. The next Winter games will be held in Japan. There, athletes will compete in downhill and cross-country skiing. Other competitions will include figuring skating and speed skating. China will host the next Summer games. Athletes will compete in swimming, diving, and gymnastics. Track and field events are also popular at the Summer games.

Progress Monitoring Probe 2 (Continued)
DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency

The Woodman and the Lost Ax (Continued)

the man was crying. When he learned the reason for the man's grief, Mercury again plunged into the lake and brought up a golden axe.

“Is this the axe you lost?” demanded Mercury.

“Yes! That's it!” the man lied. He grabbed the axe greedily.

Mercury did not like being deceived so he took the golden axe away from the man and refused to recover the axe the man had thrown into the lake. Thus, the man ended up with no axe at all, but he did learn a valuable lesson about the importance of being honest.

ORF Total: _____

Retell:

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Progress Monitoring DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency Fourth Grade Student Materials

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The Bakery

Light crept through the bedroom window and woke Josh up. At first he was a bit disoriented and did not recognize the room, but he quickly remembered where he was. Yesterday had been moving day, and this was his new home.

“Today, I’ll explore my new neighborhood and, with any luck, I’ll make some friends,” he said to himself.

Josh jumped out of bed and pushed open the window. He stretched and took a long, deep breath, and that’s when he noticed it. The air was filled with the most wonderful aroma.

“I’ve got to find out where that incredibly delicious smell is coming from!” exclaimed Josh, as he threw on his clothes and ran down the stairs.

In the kitchen, his stepmother and dad were conversing about their plans for the day over breakfast.

“Did you notice that wonderful aroma?” his stepmother asked.

“Absolutely,” replied Josh, “and I’m going to investigate where it’s coming from as soon as I finish breakfast.”

“That’s not necessary,” Dad said, “because I can tell you it’s the smell of fresh bread from a nearby bakery. In fact, I bought these breakfast muffins there just a little while ago. You should stop by and introduce yourself. Mr. Lee, the baker, really wants you to meet his son.”

After he had devoured his breakfast, Josh ambled down the sidewalk toward the bakery. He found it at the corner where his street intersected the main road. Inside the bakery, Josh saw a counter where loaves of bread were stacked along side muffins, cookies, and sweet rolls. They all smelled and looked mouthwateringly delicious.

Mr. Lee came out and welcomed Josh to the bakery. After they chatted for a while, he introduced Josh to Young-Ho, his

son. The two boys began talking and soon found they had many things in common. Young-ho offered to show Josh around the neighborhood, and they spent the morning roaming around together.

Josh headed home for lunch with a good feeling. He had, indeed, made a new friend, and what could be better than waking up each day to the smell of fresh-baked bread? He couldn't wait to learn more about his new neighborhood and meet more friends.

The Woodman and the Lost Ax

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When the Woodman returned home that evening, he told his coworkers what had happened. One of them decided he wanted to experience similar good fortune. He hurried to the lake and threw his axe into it. Then he sat down beside the lake and pretended to cry. As before, Mercury appeared and inquired why the man was crying. When he learned the reason for the man’s

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A Tour of Jewel Cave

“Ready to explore?” asked Maria’s father. Maria, her dad, and her five-year-old brother Carlo had just arrived at Jewel Cave National Monument. This was the kind of outing Maria’s father loved. “You’re going to see some amazing formations,” he said enthusiastically. On the way to the cave, Maria’s dad had explained how crystals could be seen hanging from the cave’s ceilings. “That’s why they call it Jewel Cave,” he explained.

At the cave’s entrance, they each got a lantern to light their way. Maria felt her heart pounding as an elevator took them down into the cave’s depths. When the doors opened, she felt a blast of cold air.

“It’s about forty-nine degrees in here year round,” said the tour guide. Maria was glad she was wearing suitable clothing. She had chosen rubber-soled boots, long pants, and a jacket.

Leading the way, the guide advised everyone to be careful, since parts of the winding path were slippery. Then the group walked down some steep, wooden steps into a large room where the crystals made strange, waxy formations. Maria loved the way the light sparkled off them.

It was about that time that Carlo began to complain.

“I want to leave, because I’m cold and Jewel Cave is boring,” he whined.

Suddenly, there was a rush of wind accompanied by a high-pitched noise. Some of the lanterns blew out as dark shapes flew toward the group. Carlo grabbed Maria’s hand, closed his eyes, and ducked his head.

“Don’t worry,” laughed their dad. “It’s just the bats.”

“They like it here, too,” said the tour guide. The bats passed overhead, flying into another room.

“Now are you bored?” asked Maria.

“Don’t you dare tease me,” said Carlo, pulling her forward to

see what was up ahead.

When they got back home, Carlo told everyone how much he enjoyed exploring the cave. He was already planning the things he would see and do the next time they went to visit Jewel Cave.

The Great Barrier Reef

The Great Barrier Reef is one of the great wonders of the natural world. It stretches over a thousand miles in the southern Pacific Ocean. The Reef is the largest coral reef on the planet. It is the only living thing that can be seen on earth from outer space.

Coral reefs begin as a colony of small sea creatures. Over time, as the creatures die, their connected skeletons form the base of the reef. Other creatures join the colony, and the process continues. Reefs grow slowly, at a rate of a few millimeters per year.

The Great Barrier Reef is not one reef. Rather, it is made up of over three thousand small reefs that lie close to each other. They are home to a huge number of animals and plants. Many of these can be found nowhere else on earth. Thousands of types of fish and hundreds of different birds live there. The Reef is also home to animals such as sea snakes and sea turtles. The Reef serves another purpose, as well. Many scientists believe that reefs like this one keep our oceans clean and healthy.

The Reef is filled with brilliant color and eye-catching shapes. Its beauty draws thousands of visitors each year from all over the world. Many of them enjoy swimming and diving in the clear, blue-green waters. Just think about sharing the water with a school of hot-pink fish or coming face to face with a sea snake! Visitors who do not want to brave the water can view it from one of the islands. They can also watch and enjoy the many kinds of birds that live there.

The Reef is fragile, and it can be easily damaged. It was recently added to the World Heritage List as a special protected site. The listing helps to make sure that the Reef will be protected. With luck and special care, the Reef will continue to benefit the earth and its people forever.

Wilma Rudolph

More than sixty years ago Wilma Rudolph was born into a very hard working family with little money. She was one of twenty-two children. Wilma had been small and weak at birth. Because of this, she suffered one illness after another. Her family could not afford a doctor. Wilma's mother cared for her as best she could.

When Wilma was six years old, she fell ill with polio. The disease left her legs weak, and doctors said she would never be able to walk. Mrs. Rudolph finally found a hospital willing to help Wilma. The workers there helped Wilma gain strength in her legs. At home, her brothers and sisters helped with the treatments, too. By the time she was twelve, Wilma was walking without help.

Wilma not only walked, she ran, and ran quickly. She decided to become an athlete. At first, she played basketball. Soon she became a star, leading her team to a state championship.

Wilma also developed her track skills. By age sixteen, she had won a bronze medal in a relay race the Olympic games. Wilma went on to become the first American woman to win three gold medals at the Olympics. She won three different races, two sprints of different distances and one relay race.

Using her fame as an athlete, Wilma reached out to others. She coached students in high schools and colleges. She made regular appearances on TV and radio shows. Wilma also set up a group to help bring sports into poor neighborhoods.

Wilma was African American. At the time she was born, many opportunities were not equally available for all people. It would be many years before the laws and opportunities of our country were applied equally to all people. Wilma's successes were all the more meaningful because of the challenges she

faced. Today, women and men from all backgrounds remember Wilma Rudolph with pride and respect.

A Train Ride to Gran's House

Mom and I were trying to plan exciting things to do during summer vacation, and she suggested that we take the train to Gran's house. Gran lives far from our town, so we would spend one day and one night on the train just getting there. Her plan sounded awesome to me!

The day of our trip, Mom and I went to the train station. The train arrived and we climbed aboard. It seemed dark and cool inside, compared to the bright, warm day outside. The conductor took our tickets and showed us to the car where we would ride. There were large windows along the sides of the car, so we would have a fine view. We stowed our overnight bags away and settled in for a comfortable ride. Soon the train pulled away from the station, and we went speeding down the tracks.

Out the windows, familiar buildings quickly gave way to countryside. I saw ranchers on horseback and farmers on tractors. From time to time, children who lived near the tracks would run out to wave as we passed. By lunchtime, the train had climbed onto a high plateau, and we could see mountains near the horizon.

Mom and I took our meals in the dining car. Small tables with chairs were arranged so that we could enjoy the passing scenery while we ate. The menu offered a variety of food choices. It was like being in a restaurant on wheels!

At bedtime, we were shown to our sleeping compartment. The beds were bunk style, with mine above Mom's. I climbed into bed and closed the curtain for privacy. The rocking motion of the train made it easy to fall right to sleep.

When morning came, we were near the town where Gran lived. Mom and I quickly dressed and gathered our things. As the train slowed to a stop, we saw Gran waving at us from the

platform. Spending the week with Gran would be wonderful, but I was already looking forward to the train ride back home.

These Students Made a Difference

The teacher watched his fourth-grade students struggle with the dried, cast-off Christmas trees. They were placing the trees, one by one, in a long row. Passers-by must have wondered why the students were “planting” dead trees on their town’s beach. If anyone asked, the students would explain that they wanted to protect and rebuild the sand dunes.

Dunes are hills of sand that help to hold the beach in place and protect coastal areas from rising ocean water. They also provide a home for plants and animals. Over the years, storms had destroyed many of the dunes along the beach at Margate, New Jersey. Some people had the idea that placing used Christmas trees sideways on the sand would help rebuild the dunes. Volunteers put this plan into action, but it did not work. During storms and at high tide, the trees were loosened from the sand and washed out to sea.

A group of fourth-grade students at Union Avenue School thought they had a better idea. They would place the trees upright on the beach. They reasoned that the tree limbs would catch blowing sand, causing new dunes to form around the trees.

To put their plan into action, students dug a three-foot deep trench in the sand. Then they stood the trees in the trench and filled sand in around the trunks. This held the trees firmly in place. To test their plan and make sure it was working, students tied red ribbons to the treetops. Each week they measured the distance between the ribbons and the sand. In a short while, they saw that the level of the sand was rising. The dunes were being rebuilt!

When the trees are completely covered with sand, the students plan to scatter grass seed. Dune grasses will send down roots that will help hold the new dunes in place.

Students in nearby communities learned about the new

dunes. They asked for help in planning their own dune-building projects. Now dunes all along the coast are being protected, thanks to the work of one fourth-grade class.

Yellowstone

Imagine a place where you can see grizzly bears, hot springs, fossil forests, and steam shooting from the ground. You can find just such a place in northwest Wyoming. It is called Yellowstone National Park.

For thousands of years, Native Americans lived in the area known today as Yellowstone. It was rich in resources, and the people could find plenty of food and fresh water. They also enjoyed the beauty of the place. Then an explorer who had traveled with Lewis and Clark made his way there. He had never seen such a place! It was a large, forested plateau surrounded by tall mountains. There were amazing sights everywhere he looked! The explorer told others about what he had seen. Soon, people from back East wanted to see the views for themselves.

Photographs and paintings of Yellowstone showed people in the East the wonders of the area. They began to push the government to protect this natural gem. Over one hundred years ago President Grant signed a bill turning it into a national park. It was the first national park in the world.

Today, millions of people visit Yellowstone each year. They come to see the towering mountains and beautiful scenery. Many hope to see wild animals, such as bear, elk, and wolves. Bird watchers look for bald eagles, geese, and other birds of interest. Others come to hike, boat, or fish.

People also come to Yellowstone to see its natural features. Canyons show off walls of red, yellow, orange, and brown. They hold rock formations in strange shapes. Old Faithful, a famous geyser, shoots steam and hot water into the air right on time – every seventy-five minutes. Many hot springs form striking pools and terraces.

Clearly, Yellowstone is special to Americans. It is special to other people, as well. It has been named a World Heritage Site.

People all around the world want to see this very special place
protected for future generations to enjoy.

Humpback Whales of Glacier Bay

There is a park in southeast Alaska named Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. It is a land of green forests and snow-capped mountains. Glassy waters mirror the scenic landscape. Two hundred years ago, this place was covered by sheets of ice, called glaciers. When the ice melted, it left behind a rich and beautiful environment.

During the brief summer in Alaska, daylight lasts for many hours. The sun warms the water in Glacier Bay. Small, floating plants bloom in the warming water, and tiny marine animals feed on them. The tiny animals, in turn, are the favorite food of huge humpback whales.

Glacier Bay has become famous as a summer home to humpback whales. These whales can often be seen swimming or feeding close to the shore. Humpbacks do not have teeth. Instead, they have filters called baleen. As a whale swims forward, water rushes into its mouth. As the water rushes back out, the tiny marine animals are caught in the filters and swallowed by the whale.

Humpback whales also eat larger fish. In fact, humpbacks sometimes work together to catch fish, using a process called bubble netting. A group of whales makes a circle of bubbles around a school of fish. Then the whales dive under the fish and rise up through the water. Holding their mouths open, the whales catch as many fish as they can hold. On average, a humpback whale eats almost five thousand pounds of food each day.

Humpback whales stay near the surface of the water. From time to time, they leap into the air. This action is called breaching. Whales also swim on top of the water and slap their tails noisily against it. No one knows for sure why whales do these things, but they appear to be having fun.

In September, the days become shorter in Alaska. The waters begin to cool. The food the whales depend on is no longer plentiful, so most of them leave for warmer waters. They spend the winter near Hawaii. Then, when the days begin to lengthen, the humpback whales turn again toward their summer home at Glacier Bay.

A Field Trip to the Museum

My friends and I had been looking forward to this day for weeks! Our class was finally going on the field trip to the new State History Museum. Mrs. Lopez gave each student a nametag to wear. Then we got on the bus, and after a short ride we arrived at the museum. We lined up and followed Mrs. Lopez into a large entry hall.

“The rooms are set up like a time line,” she said. “We will begin in the room that shows how the very first Native Americans lived in our state. Then we will progress through time, right up to the present. There will be a few stops along the way to watch short movies about interesting people or events.”

The rooms were filled with life-like scenes. There were also displays of clothing, jewelry, cooking pots, and so forth. When we got to the room showing how early settlers lived, I became really interested. This was the part of our history I liked the best. I must have wandered away from the class, because when I looked up from the display I had been studying, everyone was gone. I guess I looked lost, because a museum guard came over and offered to help.

“I think I know where your class is,” she said, leading me toward a darkened theater. “They are watching a movie about an early settler family. Just slip quietly through this door and take a seat near the back. No one will ever know you were left behind.”

I did just as she said, and within minutes, I was caught up in the story unfolding on the screen. When the film ended and the lights came up, we all followed Mrs. Lopez into the next room. I paid attention to all the details about the first industries in our state, but I can assure you I also kept a close eye on Mrs. Lopez. One experience of getting lost was quite enough for me!

Mountain Ecosystems

Have you ever looked into the distance and seen a steep and rugged peak? If so, you have probably seen a mountain. A mountain is a land formation that is much higher than the land that surrounds it. Mountains are usually narrower at the top than they are at the bottom, and they normally exist in ranges consisting of peaks, ridges, and valleys.

Mountains affect life in many ways. They influence climate all over the world. High mountain ranges have the most impact. These big mountains act as barriers to air masses coming from the ocean.

Ocean winds carry moist air inland. Because of their size and shape, mountains block this air and force it upwards. The water in the air then cools and forms clouds. When the clouds become full, they release their water as rain or snow. That is why it is usually wet on the ocean side of a mountain range, while deserts often form on the other side.

Mountains are sometimes called nature's water towers. All of the world's major rivers begin in the mountains. These mountain rivers flow into lakes, and they eventually spill into the oceans. People use mountain water to grow food, to make electricity, and to drink. Every day, one out of every two people on Earth drinks water that started in the mountains!

You might think of mountains as tough and stable. However, mountain ecosystems can be fragile. An ecosystem is a system of plants, animals, and other life forms living together. Because the sides of mountains are so steep, soil easily wears away, or erodes. This can harm the plants that live there. When plants die from lack of soil, the animals that feed on those plants suffer, too. Deep-rooted plants, like trees, help by holding the soil in place.

Mountains are a dramatic and beautiful part of the landscape, and many people like to hike, ski, and fish there. You can see, though, that mountains play a much greater role in peoples' lives. They are an important and valuable part of the planet Earth.

Big Bend National Park

Big Bend National Park is a meeting place. It is where the United States and Mexico meet. The mountains meet the desert there. Visitors meet new and interesting plants and animals. In Big Bend, north meets south and east meets west.

The Rio Grande is the river that forms the border between Mexico and Texas. South of El Paso, the river makes a sharp turn. Big Bend is the area bordered by this turn. It gets its name from its place on a big bend in the Rio Grande.

There are many things to do at Big Bend National Park. Young people can join the Junior Ranger Program. They complete activities in the Junior Ranger Activity Booklet. This helps them learn a lot about the park. They also earn a badge. It identifies them as an official Junior Ranger!

Of course, the river is a popular activity spot. Visitors can float down the river in rafts. During some times of the year, the river is high. The water rushes through narrow canyons. This can make for wild rides. Any time of year, though, the scenery is awesome.

Many park visitors enjoy hiking. It lets them see up close what the park has to offer. More than four hundred kinds of birds live in or visit Big Bend. Along the trail, they might see a falcon diving to catch a kangaroo rat. Deer and jackrabbits run and hide from hikers. Some hikers might see mountain lions, bears, or even wild pigs. Rangers tell them to keep away from these animals. Hikers also enjoy the many types of desert plants on the trails. After a rain, the park bursts into colorful blooms. Flowering Cacti and wildflowers compete for hikers' attention.

Rangers protect the plants and animals at Big Bend National Park. They also protect sites where scientists study the early

people who lived there. They warn park guests to be careful not to change the place. That is why there are signs that say, “Take nothing but photographs. Leave nothing but footprints.”

Swamps

In movies, swamps are often shown as dark, smelly places. They are filled with scary creatures. Viewers are afraid to think what might be hiding in the dark waters. In fact, swamps are important natural areas. They are home to many plants and animals, and they are often rich in natural resources.

Swamps differ in two major ways from other wetlands. First, swamps are covered by trees. Marshes, on the other hand, have mostly grasses. Second, swamps have mineral-rich waters. Another type of wetland, called a bog, is formed by rainwater, which has few minerals.

Fresh-water swamps are found in low-lying areas around rivers. The soggy places might be in an old river channel or in an oxbow lake formed by a curve in the river. Because swamp soil does not drain well, the water stays in place. As a result, these areas have water standing on them for much of the year. Fish, frogs, and alligators make their home in the swamp's waters. Deer, raccoons, and other small animals and birds find food and shelter in the swamp. There are many swamps in the United States. Some of the largest ones are found in the southern states.

Salt-water swamps are formed by flooding or draining of seawater in flat coastal areas. Although most plants won't grow in the salty water, mangrove trees thrive. Some animals that do not like salt water live in these swamps. For example, green monkeys live in the tops of the mangrove trees. They never touch the water! Crabs, pelicans, and other sea animals live there, too. Salt-water swamps often form where large rivers meet the ocean. Some of these can be found in Asia, Africa, and South America.

Along with plants and animals, coal is a resource found in some swamps. Plants from millions of years ago decayed and formed the coal. Today, people mine the coal and use it as fuel.

Swamps may not seem appealing at first glance. But by looking closer, you can find many things to like about this interesting natural area.

Tae Kwon Do

There is a kind of martial art that began many years ago in Korea. It is called tae kwon do. The name means “the art of hand and foot fighting.” It is one of the most popular martial arts in the world.

People of all ages, young and old, are welcomed as students. Working with a teacher, they learn a series of fighting moves. Many of the moves involve dramatic kicks. The kicks are often done while jumping and spinning. After students learn the moves, they practice them. This might mean fighting with other students in a controlled manner. Some students even break boards or other thick materials in practice!

Students learn more than just moves. They learn courtesy, determination, and self-control as well as loyalty to country, friends, and school. It also teaches the importance of respect for family, teachers, and elders. In fact, the goal of tae kwon do is to build a more peaceful world. It does this by helping one student at a time become healthy, happy, and more well-rounded.

In classes and at contests, students and teachers wear a white, loose-fitting uniform. Each uniform has a belt. The color of the belt shows the person’s rank, or level of skill. Beginners wear white belts. By passing tests, students earn different colored belts. They progress through yellow, green, blue, and red belts. The highest rank is the black belt. People who wear black belts are considered experts. It takes years of practice and instruction to achieve a black belt.

For over thirty years, tae kwon do has been practiced as a competitive sport. Those competing wear protective gear to prevent injuries. Judges decide how well people perform their moves, break boards, and fight competitors. Recently, tae kwon do has become so popular that it is now an official Olympic sport.

Cat Care

Cats are popular pets because they are easy and fun to live with. Most cats are quiet, clean, independent, and loving. They can bring joy and laughter into a home. In turn, pet owners can do a few things to keep their cats happy and purring.

Cats need to have regular checkups. A trip to the veterinarian each year can help keep your cat healthy. There are certain shots cats need to have. These shots prevent dangerous diseases. The vet can also look for problems with your cat's ears or skin. Most problems are easily treated if they are caught early.

Pet owners must choose among different kinds of cat food. A variety of dry cat foods are available to pet owners. By reading labels, owners can choose the one that is best for their cat. Some cats, though, are picky eaters and prefer canned food. This choice usually costs more than dry cat food, and it is not as easy to serve. Still, many owners are glad to pamper their picky pets. Along with good food, cats need plenty of fresh water. Owners should change the water in their cat's dish each day.

Pet owners can choose to keep a cat indoors. Sometimes a cat is allowed to explore outdoors if the cat is old enough and lives in a safe area. Indoor cats will need a litter box. The box should always be kept in the same place so that it is easy for the cat to find. It is important that the litter box be kept clean. Indoor cats also benefit from a scratching post. A good scratching post helps keep your cat from clawing at furniture or other items in the house. All cats should be checked regularly for fleas and ticks. Treatments are available for these problems. Some cats need to have their fur brushed to remove burrs.

Perhaps the most important things a cat needs are love and attention. They are often the easiest things to give, too. A warm, purring cat can be the source of great joy and satisfaction.

Angel Falls

Angel Falls is the highest waterfall on earth. It lies in the heart of Venezuela, a country in South America. Starting from atop Devil's Mountain, it drops more than three thousand feet into Devil's Canyon. That makes Angel Falls nineteen times higher than Niagara Falls!

Flat-topped mountains surround the falls. These "table mountains" with their flat, steep sides add to the drama of the landscape. Water falls freely from cliffs and reaches the bottom of the valley as a fine spray. The mist then runs into a small creek, which eventually grows into a river.

Angel Falls was not named for heavenly, winged creatures. Rather, it is named for an American pilot and adventurer, Jimmie Angel. Jimmie Angel thought that the area around the falls contained a lost river where gold could be found. Over sixty years ago he took his small plane to search for the gold. He landed on top of a mountain near the river he hoped to explore. As luck would have it, his plane got stuck in a boggy marsh. Angel could not take off again. As he scouted around the area, the pilot heard a loud, roaring sound. Moving toward the noise, he came upon the amazing sight of the falls. Angel had to hike for days through the jungle to get back to his camp. When he finally arrived, he told others about the falls. Word spread, and soon people from all over wanted to see this wonder for themselves.

Many visitors have been drawn to the challenges and beauty of this land. It takes some determination simply to see Angel Falls, though. There is no way to reach the falls by road, so people must fly into the area. Planes usually land at a village about thirty miles from the falls. Then the visitors take a small plane or a boat to see this amazing natural wonder.

Getting to Angel Falls is not an easy task, but people who go there agree the experience is well worth the effort.

Automobile History

As early as the fifteenth century, inventors imagined vehicles that could move under their own power. It wasn't until almost three hundred years later, though, that such vehicles were built. The first ones were steam-powered carriages. It took another one hundred years after that before people began building cars powered by gas engines. These cars were safer and easier to use than the steam-powered ones.

At first, the new gas-powered cars were very expensive. Only rich people could afford them. Then, at the beginning of the twentieth century, a man named Henry Ford began making a car called the Model T. It was the first car produced on an assembly line. All of the Model T's were black, because black paint dried faster than other colors. Ford used to say, "You can have any color you want as long as it's black."

Using Ford's assembly line, a car could be built in shorter time, so it cost less. Finally, working people such as farmers, teachers, and factory workers could afford to own a car.

Since that time, many other companies have joined Ford in producing cars on an assembly line. Over the years, the cars have changed dramatically. Today they are available in a rainbow of colors and in many different styles. Air conditioning, sound systems, and other luxury features are common in cars. Modern cars are much more powerful than the early ones, and they are equipped with safety equipment unheard of in the early days.

Owning cars has changed the way people work and live. Before they had cars, people had to live close to where they worked. That is because most had to walk to work. If they lived in the country, people had to plan weekly or monthly shopping trips. It was not easy to hitch up the horses and make the trip into town in a wagon. Today, of course, people live in suburbs and commute to work in the city. They drive at the spur of the

moment to neighborhood shopping malls. Banks, restaurants, and other places of businesses are even set up to serve customers in their cars.

Today, companies work to make cars better and safer. Just imagine how cars might change in the next one hundred years!

A Winter Day on the Farm

Turning away from the window's light, Sam pulled the covers up tightly around his shoulders. He hated to think about leaving the warmth of his bed to do chores. Sighing in resignation, he forced his feet onto the cold floor and scrambled for his clothes.

Sam had recently moved with his family to a farm on the prairie. He missed all his friends from town. Each weekday, they had gathered in the one-room schoolhouse, where they learned about math and science and faraway places. Things were different now. Town was hours away, and as for school, Sam's mother taught him his lessons each day.

Sam bundled up in warm clothes and set out to do his chores. He walked across the yard toward the barn. The north wind howled and gray clouds seemed to hug the earth. Sam struggled to open the barn door, because the wind was pushing so hard against it. Inside, Bessie the cow was chewing on what was left of last night's hay. Sam filled her feed tray and then began milking. Soon his pail was filled with fresh, foamy milk. He covered the pail and picked up the egg basket. In the chicken shed he found ten speckled hen eggs. He rewarded the chickens with an extra handful of feed, which he scattered on the floor for them to eat.

Leaving the barn with his pail and basket, Sam was greeted by large, wet snowflakes that were quickly covering the barnyard in a blanket of white. He hurried to the house and took the milk and eggs into the kitchen.

"Isn't the snow beautiful, Sam?" asked Mother. "Let's eat breakfast, and then we'll find your old sled. Your lessons can wait a while! Dad has gone over to the Anderson's farm to see if their children want to come over and help us build a snowman," she added.

Suddenly, Sam did not feel quite so bad about the cold weather or the loneliness of farm life. He pulled his chair up to the table and hungrily began to fill his plate.

Hurricanes

What is big and dangerous and has only one eye? The answer is a hurricane!

Hurricanes are large, strong storms. They form over warm ocean waters. Hurricanes usually begin as a small cluster of storms. Heat and moisture from ocean water fuel the storms and cause them to grow. As they grow, the storms begin to spin. This spinning mass is called a tropical storm. When winds reach a constant speed of seventy-four miles per hour, the storm becomes a hurricane.

At the center of a hurricane is an area called the eye. It usually measures twenty to thirty miles in diameter. The eye is relatively calm and free of clouds. The area around the eye is called the eye wall. That is where the most violent weather occurs. Wind speeds in the eye wall can be over one hundred miles per hour or more!

In the United States, hurricane season lasts from June through November. During this time, scientists keep a close eye on the tropics. They watch for a building storm. Then they track its movement on weather maps. This helps them figure out where the storm might go next. People living in coastal areas need plenty of warning if a hurricane is approaching. Scientists issue a hurricane watch when there is a chance a hurricane will reach land. They issue a hurricane warning when the threat becomes real.

When hurricanes reach land, they can cause great damage. Heavy winds and rain are problems. Another hazard is the storm surge. This is a dome of ocean water that is forced inland by the storm. It pushes aside everything in its path. Hurricanes die out soon after moving onto land. They no longer have the warm moist air that is the fuel they need to grow. Often, the dying storm floods inland areas with rain.

Hurricanes can be damaging and dangerous. It is not necessary to fear them, though. Modern weather forecasts help people prepare for the storms. With plenty of warning, people can protect themselves from the force of a hurricane.

Special Olympics

Forty years ago, Eunice Shriver, started a sports camp. It was for children with disabilities. She held the day camp at her home. For the next five years, she helped start similar camps all around the country. A few years later she started Special Olympics, a program of year-round sports training and athletic contests for people with disabilities.

Today, Special Olympics serves about one million people. There are branches in hundreds of countries. The program helps both children and adults improve their physical fitness. It also helps them build self-confidence and it is just plain fun. Once you see the joy of participating on a young athlete's face, you are likely to be hooked.

The Special Olympics offers sports for each season. During fall, athletes practice long-distance running and walking. They also bowl and play volleyball. In winter, they practice skiing and ice skating. Spring sports include soccer, diving, swimming, and cycling. In summer, athletes play tennis, softball, and golf.

Athletes never pay fees to compete in or practice sports. Coaches and helpers give their time freely. Family members and friends of athletes also help out in many ways. Money is raised by community groups. The money is used to sponsor events, buy medals, pay for sports gear, and so forth.

Every two years, Special Olympics holds World Games. Leading athletes from many countries compete in different sports. The next Winter games will be held in Japan. There, athletes will compete in downhill and cross-country skiing. Other competitions will include figuring skating and speed skating. China will host the next Summer games. Athletes will compete in swimming, diving, and gymnastics. Track and field events are also popular at the Summer games.

In communities around the world, Special Olympics makes a difference in people's lives. The purpose behind Special Olympics might best be summed up by its oath: "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."