



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## WALT DISNEY

Where is “the happiest place on earth”? Some say it is Disneyland! Do you know the person who created this amazing theme park? He was a man named Walt Disney. Walt Disney was a pioneer in motion pictures. He also created Mickey Mouse and the Disney World theme parks. Walt Disney received hundreds of awards from all over the world.

Walt Disney was born in Chicago, Illinois. He was raised on a farm in Missouri with four other siblings. Walt’s parents, Flora and Elias Disney, encouraged his creativity and sketches and drawings. Walt sold his first sketches at the age of seven.

After serving some time in the Red Cross, Walt got a job as an advertising cartoonist. This was where he marketed and created his first animated cartoon. In 1925, Walt married Lillian Bounds. They had two daughters. Another important member of the family was brought to life in 1928. That was Mickey Mouse.

Walt perfected the combination of animation and sound. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was created in 1937. Since then, the Disney name has gone on to produce hundreds of animated movies.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What are the author’s feelings about Walt Disney?
  - indifferent
  - disapproves
  - unsure
  - admires
- Which sentence shows how the author feels about Walt Disney?
  - Walt married Lillian Bounds.
  - Disney was born in Chicago.
  - Walt Disney perfected the combination of animation and sound.
  - Walt got a job as an advertising cartoonist.
- Which sentence is not an example of the encouragement Disney received through the years?
  - He got a job at an advertising agency.
  - He invented Mickey Mouse.
  - His parents encouraged his creativity.
  - He received awards from all over the world.
- What is the meaning of word *pioneer* in this passage?
  - trailblazer of new ideas
  - worker
  - traveled across the plains
  - nomads



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## HELEN KELLER

Can you imagine what it would be like not to be able to see or hear? When Helen Keller was 19 months old, she became very ill. Doctors expected her to die, but she survived. Helen's mother soon noticed that Helen was not responding when the dinner bell rang or when she waved her hand in front of Helen's face. It then became apparent that Helen's illness had left her blind and deaf. She was born on June 27, 1880 in Alabama, where she lived with her family. She was frustrated and confused. She didn't know what was going on in her world. Her parents knew that they needed help. They hired a tutor for Helen. Her name was Anne Sullivan.

Success didn't happen right away. But one day at the water pump, a breakthrough happened. Anne spelled the word *water* in Helen's hand. Helen began to catch on. Suddenly, her brain was on fire. She reached down to touch the ground, and Anne spelled the word *earth* in her hand. She continued pointing and learning. She learned to spell 30 words on that day.

By the age of 10, Helen had learned to speak by feeling her teacher's mouth when she talked. Some people couldn't understand Helen, but she kept trying. She learned to read French, German, Greek, and Latin in Braille. Braille is a way for people who can't see to read. Raised dots are used to represent letters and words. Soon Helen could read, write, and speak.

Helen Keller went on to give speeches all over the world. Most of the money she earned was given to the American Foundation for the Blind. She met 12 U.S. presidents, wrote a dozen books, and went to college. Helen Keller lived to be 87. She continues to inspire many people worldwide.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Why was Helen Keller so successful in life?
  - People felt sorry for her and took pity on her.
  - She eventually got her vision and hearing back.
  - She learned to overcome obstacles and work hard.
  - She was able to meet 12 U.S. presidents and speak worldwide.
- What can you learn about Anne Sullivan from reading this passage?
  - She traveled the world to give speeches.
  - She was diligent in her efforts with Helen Keller.
  - She was blind herself.
  - She was placed in an orphanage.
- According to the passage, which of the following statements is true?
  - Helen Keller was unable to overcome great obstacles to do great things.
  - Helen Keller didn't have to work hard to succeed.
  - Helen's parents made the right choice in hiring Anne Sullivan.
  - Blind people can be taught how to read Braille, but not deaf people.





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

## BABE RUTH

On February 16, 1895, a star was born. A baseball star, that is—George Herman Ruth, Jr. He would go on to be one of the greatest baseball players of all time. At the age of seven, George’s father took him to St. Mary’s School. It was a reform school and an orphanage. George seldom saw his family after that. He was in trouble a lot at school. Brother Matthias took George under his wing and became a great supporter of young George.

George showed a natural talent for baseball early on. He was a great catcher and pitcher. Jack Dunn gave George his first baseball contract, which was to play with the Baltimore Orioles. The players called him “Jack’s newest babe,” and the name stuck. From then on he was known as *Babe Ruth*.

Babe Ruth stayed with the Orioles for only five months. At the age of 19, he was playing in the major leagues for the Boston Red Sox. Babe set many records. One of them still stands: He still holds the record for pitching 13 innings without a score. This game went on to be the longest complete game of the World Series. Babe went on to play for the New York Yankees. He set even more records. In 1920, his first season with the Yankees, he set a record of hitting 54 home runs. His greatest homerun was probably when he pointed to the outfield wall in Wrigley Field and hit what is believed to be the longest home run hit there—right where he had pointed. Babe Ruth deserves to have his name remembered in baseball for many years to come.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. What does the phrase “take him under his wing” mean?
  - a. hook him up with a pair of wings
  - b. show him some tricks of the trade
  - c. nurture and be a mentor for Babe
  - d. teach him techniques that will help on the baseball field
2. What is a word that could be used to describe Babe Ruth?
  - a. studious
  - b. talented
  - c. rugged
  - d. honest
3. George’s childhood could be described as . . .
  - a. loving and caring.
  - b. supportive yet strict.
  - c. typical and normal.
  - d. unhappy and unsettled.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## HENRY FORD

Born the first child to William and Mary Ford in 1863, Henry grew up on a farm in Michigan. He went to school in a one-room schoolhouse and helped do chores on the farm. At a young age, he was very interested in how things worked.

He left home at the age of 16 to work with a machinist. He did odd jobs after that until he married Clara Bryant. At that point, he ran a sawmill. Finally, in 1891, he became an engineer at the Edison Illuminating Company in Detroit. He worked up through the ranks, which allowed him free time to work with engines. He created his own quadricycle, which was a bike on four wheels.

Ford went on to accomplish his dream of owning his own company and making his own car. In 1908, he introduced the Model T, but cars were still too expensive for most people. Ford invented the moving assembly line, which allowed him to make cars that were inexpensive, reliable, and efficient. Ford is credited with making the United States a nation of cars. His company is still around today. It is the Ford Motor Company.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What interests did Henry Ford have?
  - learning how an airplane worked
  - running a sawmill
  - learning how things work
  - building a car with good gas mileage
- Ford probably became a machinist's apprentice so he could . . .
 

a. be trained in how to work machines.	c. be taught how to build cars.
b. teach how to work machinery.	d. learn about the history of automobiles.
- What is the meaning of the word *credited* in the last paragraph?
  - added to
  - known for
  - increasing debt
- What is the main idea of paragraph three?
  - Ford's invention of the quadricycle led to the car.
  - Ford was trained by a machinist.
  - Ford's cars were too expensive for people.
  - Ford's ideas and creativity made cars popular.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## LAURA INGALLS WILDER

The *Little House* books tell the story of Laura Ingalls Wilder and her family. Laura traveled with her parents and her sister, Mary, in a covered wagon across many states, including across the Indian Territory. They traveled around a lot. They set up a home each time they moved. Each place had different problems to face, but they worked together as a family.

Laura was born many years ago, in 1867. That was before there was electricity, cars, or television. Her family fought off grasshoppers, storms, dust, food shortages, and more. Laura's older sister, Mary, suffered a stroke and lost her eyesight. Laura's baby brother, Freddy, got sick and died. Another sister, Grace, was soon born into the family. It was a time of sacrifice for everyone. But the family stuck together. They learned to enjoy life, have fun, and make the best of it.

Laura went on to school and studied hard. She became the top student of the class and became a teacher. Laura went on to marry Almanzo Wilder. It was their daughter, Rose, who encouraged Laura to write her stories. These stories were published in a book that was instantly loved worldwide.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What type of stories are the *Little House* books?
  - historical fiction
  - mystery
  - science fiction
  - fantasy
- What conclusions can be drawn about the Ingalls family?
  - They were religious and dedicated to missionary work.
  - They were wealthy and lived a life of luxury.
  - They were hard working and persevering.
  - They were lazy and undetermined.
- Which statement best explains why Laura's books were so well received?
  - They were filled with adventure and real-life experiences.
  - People had the same experiences that Laura had.
  - These books were written in first person.
  - The content in the books is factual information.
- What is the meaning of the phrase "stuck together" in the passage?
  - They were connected and couldn't get apart.
  - They were willing to sacrifice and get sick together.
  - They didn't like their neighbors much, so they spent time together as a family.
  - They didn't give up or turn away when times were tough.





Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CLAUDE MONET

Claude Monet was a famous painter. You have probably seen some of his paintings. Monet was born in 1840 in Paris, France. His mother died in 1857. Life was not easy for him, but he had talent. His talent helped him throughout his life. His art began in drawing little cartoon pictures. A man by the name of Boudin noticed Monet's talent and gave him his first painting lesson. He was the one who encouraged Monet to paint outdoors. His family was not very happy about his job as a painter.

Monet had to go to Northern Africa, but when he got back, he went to Paris to get some more painting lessons. Monet's paintings are famous for their impression of light. Most of his paintings were painted outdoors. In this time, most painting was done inside in a studio. Painting outdoors was a new idea with painting. The type of painting that he was doing is called Impressionism. More and more people began to like this style of painting.

Monet had bad eyesight and other health problems. This made it difficult to paint. But he painted until the day he died. One of his most famous paintings is of water lilies. Monet died of lung cancer at the age of 83.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- How did drawing outdoors change the way painting was done?
  - The paint dried out more easily, and so it was expensive.
  - Painting outdoors allowed painters to use natural light in their artwork.
  - Painting was done using darker colors.
- Why were paintings done outdoors unusual?
 

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They captured the light.</li> <li>They portrayed the countryside.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most paintings during this time were done indoors.</li> <li>You were paid more for paintings done outside.</li> </ol>
---	--
- After reading the passage, what can you infer about why Monet's parents were disappointed with his decision to paint?
 

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They wanted him to keep drawing cartoon pictures.</li> <li>They didn't think it was the right job for him.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They didn't think it would be good for his health.</li> <li>They didn't think highly of his teacher Boudin.</li> </ol>
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- Which statement does not explain what made Monet such a good artist?
  - Monet loved to paint outdoors and use light in his paintings.
  - Monet was trained by Boudin and encouraged to paint outdoors.
  - Monet had little support from his parents.
  - Monet painted to the last day of his life.



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

## DR. SEUSS

On March 2, 1904, Theodore Seuss Gisel was born. Does that name sound familiar? Later in life he was known as Dr. Seuss, even though he was not a doctor. Many people felt that his books were like medicine. Dr. Seuss was a famous children's book author who wrote many books. These beloved books have been read by millions of children. You've probably read many of his books, as well.

Do you remember reading a story about green eggs and ham? How about a book about Horton who hatched an egg? These books capture the rhyming sounds of words and letters. Often, Dr. Seuss would make up words to go in his books. His books are also filled with creative and interesting creatures. Many of these creatures have been made up, but they seem real!

In the 1950s, there was a concern that children were not reading books because they found books boring. A publisher sent Dr. Seuss a list of important words for young readers. He wanted him to write a book that was fun and entertaining using these words. That was how *The Cat in the Hat* was born. Dr. Seuss went on to write many books that were both fun to read and entertaining. He was a creative author who made an impact on millions of readers.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Another title for this reading passage would be . . .
  - "Green Eggs and Ham."
  - "Literacy for the Young."
  - "Dr. Seuss: The Amazing Author."
  - "Dr. Seuss and His Patients."
- Some similarities that are found in all of Dr. Seuss's books include . . .
  - rhyming and rhythm.
  - words using all letters of the alphabet.
  - free verse poetry.
  - nonfiction facts and details about animals.
- In the last paragraph, what does the word *impact* mean?
  - targeted
  - hit
  - insight
  - influence
- Based on the information in the passage, how did Dr. Seuss get his name?
  - Many felt his books were like medicine.
  - He was creative and young.
  - He went to medical school for a few years.
  - He had a Ph.D. and was called Dr. Seuss.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## JOHN GLENN

John Glenn was born in 1921 and grew up in Cambridge, Ohio. He married his childhood sweetheart, Anna Castor. They had two children, David and Carolyn. He went to college in Ohio and then entered the Marine Corps. He flew planes in World War II. He also flew for the Air Force after the war and received several medals for his service.

In 1959, John Glenn joined NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration). NASA is where astronauts are trained to go up into space. He was one of the first Mercury astronauts. He piloted the first manned spacecraft that orbited Earth. After completing three trips around Earth, he became a national hero.

John also ran for senate in his home state of Ohio and won. He had tried to win a seat in office a few times before. He finally became a senator in 1974. He also won re-election in 1980 and again in 1986.

But John's time in space was not done yet. After many years away, in 1998 he went on a second space mission. He was 77 years old. He wanted to help do experiments. These experiments could help scientists learn what happens to older people in space.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think John was able to go into space again at age 77?
  - a. He was going to die anyway.
  - b. He had already had experience being in space.
  - c. He was in good health.
  - d. He had won the race as senator.
2. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
  - a. It introduces the main idea of the passage.
  - b. It discusses John Glenn's experience as an astronaut.
  - c. It discusses John Glenn's experience as a politician.
  - d. It explains the experiments done in space.
3. A good way to answer question #2 above is to . . .
  - a. reread the entire passage.
  - b. reread the first paragraph.
  - c. look for the words *astronaut* and *John Glenn*.
  - d. reread the third paragraph and determine the main idea.





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

## ABIGAIL ADAMS

Have you ever heard of President Adams? You've probably heard of him twice. There were actually two presidents with the same last name. That's because they were father and son. The wife and mother of these two presidents was Abigail Adams. This was the first time anything like this happened. Abigail is one of the most admired first ladies.

Abigail was born in Weymouth, Massachusetts. She never went to school, but she was very smart. She raised four children. She also ran the farm, and was widely known for her fight for American independence. She was asked her opinion many times on events taking place during Colonial times.

Abigail's husband, John Adams, was elected president of the United States in 1796. He was the second president. He and his wife were the first to live in the White House. John was not reelected, and so he and his wife returned to the farm. Abigail lived a great life, but she would not live long enough to see her son, John Quincy Adams, elected the sixth president of the United States.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- How does the author feel about Abigail Adams?
  - She was a typical first lady.
  - She was an intelligent and admired first lady.
  - She died before she saw her son become president.
  - She ran a farm and fought for American independence.
- Which statement supports the author's opinion of Abigail Adams?
  - She was asked her opinion on events taking place during Colonial times.
  - Abigail Adams was the wife and mother of a president.
  - She never went to school, but she was very smart.
  - Abigail was the first wife of the president to live in the White House.
- The third paragraph informs the reader about . . .
  - Abigail's life on the farm.
  - Abigail's life in Massachusetts.
  - Abigail's work for American independence.
  - Abigail's life as wife and later mother of the president of the United States.
- Where might this information about Abigail most likely be found?
  - in a book about the Revolutionary War
  - in a pamphlet about the president of the United States
  - on a website about the presidents of the United States and their wives
  - on a website about bad women of the United States



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## ELVIS PRESLEY

Do you like rock and roll music? A man named Elvis Presley helped create this type of music. This music also made Elvis a star. Elvis was born in Mississippi, but he was raised in Memphis, Tennessee. He liked to sing growing up but never really did much with it. When he graduated from high school, he got a job driving a truck.

One day in 1953, Elvis went to the Sun Record Company. He wanted to record a song for his mother. The president of the company heard Elvis sing, and he was impressed. He offered a recording contract to Elvis. Fans across the country loved his singing as well. His songs were heard all over.

Another company named RCA signed a recording contract with Elvis. This company released five of his songs at once. He sold millions of records. By 1959, he had sold 21 million records. He was also in movies and went on tours to perform his songs. He was the world's most famous entertainer of his time.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. Where do you find out which company Elvis signed a deal with first?
  - a. first paragraph
  - b. second paragraph
  - c. third paragraph
2. The author probably wrote this passage to . . .
  - a. warn listeners of Elvis' background.
  - b. inform the reader about Elvis' weaknesses.
  - c. inform the reader of Elvis' history.
  - d. inform the reader of Elvis' love for singing.
3. How many records does the passage say Elvis had sold by 1959?
  - a. 25 million
  - b. 21 thousand
  - c. 20 million
  - d. 21 million
4. Which of the following statements is not a fact about Elvis Presley?
  - a. Elvis enjoyed singing.
  - b. Elvis grew up in Memphis, TN.
  - c. Elvis grew up singing and recording records.
  - d. Elvis was discovered when he tried to record a song for his mother.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

A person who is often mentioned as someone who helped the poor and those in need is Eleanor Roosevelt. It has been said that Eleanor was as kind a woman as she was strong. Born in New York City, Eleanor was sent to England for school. When she came back to the United States, she started doing social work to help the poor. Throughout her life she always found ways to keep helping the poor.

Eleanor married her cousin Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1906. Together, they raised six children. Franklin came down with the illness polio in 1921. By this time, he was active in politics. He felt that because of his illness, he should step down. But Eleanor encouraged him to keep trying. He was elected governor of New York seven years later.

In 1932, Eleanor went across the country with Franklin as he ran for president of the United States. By the time he was elected, the country was in the middle of a depression. Once again, Eleanor worked hard to help the hungry and jobless people. During WWII, Eleanor helped the troops. Later, she was named a delegate to the United Nations. She spent the rest of her life aiding and helping those in need.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Where do you find out about Eleanor's work during World War II?
  - end of the first paragraph
  - in the second paragraph
  - end of the third paragraph
  - beginning of the third paragraph
- The author probably wrote this passage to . . .
  - inform the reader of President Roosevelt's time as president.
  - inform the reader about Eleanor's time as first lady.
  - portray Eleanor's support of Franklin D. Roosevelt.
  - portray Eleanor's commitment to helping and serving others throughout her life.
- What does the phrase "active in politics" mean?
  - taking part in government
  - finishing a term in politics
  - president of a political party
  - loves to discuss politics
- Which of the following statements is not a fact about Eleanor Roosevelt?
  - Eleanor was supportive of her husband's service to the country.
  - Eleanor's background was similar to the disadvantaged people she helped.
  - Eleanor was caring for the jobless and poor throughout her life.





Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

Did you answer the phone today? You have Alexander Bell to thank for that. Bell was the son of a speech teacher. He had helped his father through the years and learned many things. He was taught how people learned to speak and hear. He used this knowledge to help deaf people learn to speak.

Bell was born in Scotland in 1847. The Bell family eventually moved to Canada. Bell moved on to Boston, where he continued his work with deaf people. He was trying to invent a machine that would help deaf people speak. His first success was when he sent a musical note over an electrical wire.

Bell kept working and experimenting. He invented a machine that was able to send and receive human speech. One day he spilled acid on his clothes. He decided to use his machine to send a "help" message to his friend. His friend got the message through the machine! The telephone had been invented. Some people thought that others had invented the telephone. The Supreme Court finally ruled in Bell's favor. Bell eventually got a patent for his invention.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Alexander Graham Bell would probably be most interested in which of the following inventions?
  - microwave
  - cell phone
  - Braille
  - car
- According to the passage, how did Bell finally receive the patent for his invention?
  - He waited the official 10 years for it to happen.
  - He went to the patent office to get the official rights.
  - The Supreme Court ruled in Bell's favor.
  - He spilled acid on his clothes and called his friend for help.
- What is the main idea of the passage?
  - Through hard work and dedication, Bell was able to accomplish great things.
  - how the telephone was invented
  - how Bell's background proved helpful
  - how Bell won the patent for the telephone
- What was the original purpose of the machine Bell invented?
  - He was trying to invent the microphone.
  - He was trying to invent the telephone.
  - He was trying to invent a machine that would help deaf people speak.



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

## JOHN F. KENNEDY

John F. Kennedy was the 35th president of the United States. He was a very young president. Many people liked his leadership style. John was born into a very wealthy family. He was one of nine children. He went to private schools as a child and went on to Harvard University. World War II broke out and John was enlisted in the Navy. While at war, John was a war hero. He saved the lives of many men when their ship was hit.

After the war, he ran for senator of Massachusetts. He won by a huge margin. He served two terms. In 1960, he ran for president of the country. He debated against Richard Nixon. These were the first debates on television. John was elected president by a narrow margin. He was the youngest person ever to be elected president. He and his wife, Jackie, had young children in the White House.

As president, John worked hard to solve tough problems. He created the Peace Corps, as well as other programs. But not everyone approved. Kennedy was shot and killed in Dallas, Texas in November 1963. Police arrested Lee Harvey Oswald for the assassination of President Kennedy.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Based on the passage, what were some of John's interests?
  - playing polo
  - fighting in the military
  - helping and serving others
  - opening up talks with the Cuban leadership
- What can you conclude about John Kennedy?
  - He was loved and adored by everyone.
  - He was able to accomplish many things in a short time period.
  - He was learning to speak another language.
  - He was the best president of the United States.
- Which of the following items would not be on President Kennedy's resume?
  - fought in World War II
  - elected president of the United States
  - served as a senator for Massachusetts
  - arrested Lee Harvey Oswald
- What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
  - Lee Harvey Oswald was not mentally stable.
  - President Kennedy was loved by some and despised by others.
  - President Kennedy was the youngest person ever to be elected president.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CHARLES LINDBERGH

The first person to fly alone across the Atlantic Ocean was Charles Lindbergh. Lindbergh loved to fly. He started flying at the age of 20. The following year, he bought his own plane. In the beginning, Lindbergh was a stunt pilot. He was paid to do tricks with his plane.

Then, Lindbergh began working as an airmail pilot. He delivered mail by airplane. He would fly back and forth between St. Louis and Chicago. Lindbergh was gaining experience flying long distances.

In 1926, Lindbergh began thinking about flying his plane nonstop from New York to Paris. This had never been done before. There was a prize of \$25,000 for the first person who could do it. Lindbergh got a group of businessmen from St. Louis to help him. The first thing he did was buy a new plane. He named it the "Spirit of St. Louis." He set a speed record flying from San Diego to New York.

On May 20, 1927, Lindbergh accomplished the goal of crossing the Atlantic Ocean. It took him 33 hours. He was an instant hero and was given the Congressional Medal of Honor.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Which statement best explains the success of Charles Lindbergh?
  - Lindbergh grew up in a wealthy family.
  - Lindbergh learned to fly planes at an early age.
  - Lindbergh had the talent, support, and courage to fly across the ocean alone.
  - Lindbergh was motivated to earn a lot of prize money.
- Which paragraph mentions the medal that Lindbergh was awarded?
 

a. first paragraph	c. third paragraph
b. second paragraph	d. fourth paragraph
- Which statement explains the reason behind the name "Spirit of St. Louis"?
  - Lindbergh was given financial support from men in St. Louis.
  - Lindbergh was originally from St. Louis.
  - St. Louis was the name of his wife.
  - St. Louis was the place where the contest was held.
- What is the author's opinion of Charles Lindbergh?
  - unbiased and disinterested
  - impressed and appreciative
  - apathetic and interested





Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## OPRAH WINFREY

People throughout the world know Oprah Winfrey's name. But this was not always the case. Oprah was born in 1954 to Vernita Lee and Vernon Winfrey. She was poor and had an unstable family. She went to live with her grandmother. By her grandmother, she was taught to read at a very young age. She also began reciting poems and other pieces in front of her church congregation. Oprah's grandmother called her "gifted." Oprah didn't know exactly what that meant, but she thought it must mean she was special.

At the age of 19, Oprah got a job as a reporter for a radio station in Nashville. During this time, Oprah won beauty pageants and entered college at Tennessee State University. In 1976, Oprah hosted a television show in Baltimore. It was a success. Oprah stayed with the show for eight years. She left to start her own show in Chicago. In 1986, Oprah began the show entitled, "The Oprah Winfrey Show." It was a huge success and ran for 25 years.

But Oprah has not just been a television personality; she has been an advocate for those in need. She gives out millions of dollars and has set up a network to raise money for the less fortunate. She has also pushed the importance of literacy and set up a book club to encourage reading. She continues to have huge success across the world.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What is the purpose of the passage?
  - to inform the reader about the history of television
  - to instruct the reader on how to be successful on television
  - to paint a brief picture of the life of Oprah Winfrey
  - to share Oprah Winfrey's interest in television
- What is the meaning of the word *gifted* as used in the passage?
 

a. talented and exceptional	c. bestowed with a gift to help others
b. special and special needs	d. endowed with a lot of money
- What is the main message in this passage about Oprah Winfrey?
  - Know what you want to be early in life.
  - Plan big for great things might happen.
  - Don't give up even when things are hard.
  - Work as hard as you can at an early age to earn a large amount of money.
- Oprah Winfrey is known for . . .
  - her hard work in wealthy areas.
  - her interest in literacy and helping others.
  - setting up the Peace Corps.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## JESSE OWENS

One of the best track and field athletes of all time was Jesse Owens. Jesse's talent and abilities still inspire many people. Jesse set his first record in junior high school. By high school, he was known across the nation. He decided to attend college in Ohio. While competing in college track-and-field meets, Jesse broke three world records and tied a fourth. He was on fire! It took 25 years before anyone broke the running broad-jump record he set at that time.

A year later, Jesse was able to compete in the Olympic Games held in Berlin. The year was 1936, and during that time Adolf Hitler was building up the Nazi Party in Germany. That year, Hitler said that no black person could possibly beat his "Master Race" athletes. Hitler couldn't have been more wrong. Jesse set records at this Olympics while at the same time beating Hitler's athletes.

In that Olympics, Jesse tied the record in the 100-meter sprint. He ran on the 400-meter relay team and set a record. He also set new Olympic and world records for the 200-meter sprint and the running broad-jump. He was incredible! Hitler was very upset. He did not even stay in the stadium. He left so that he wouldn't have to see Jesse being awarded any of the gold medals he had won.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What is the author's purpose of writing about Jesse Owens?
  - to share the facts about Jesse Owens
  - to share the inspiring story of Jesse Owens
  - to point out Hitler's rude behavior at the Olympics
  - to list all the medals Jesse won
- Which sentence from the passage shares how the author feels about Jesse Owens?
  - Jesse tied the record in the 100-meter sprint.
  - He also set new Olympic and world records for the 200-meter sprint and running broad jump.
  - He was incredible!
  - By high school, he was known across the nation.
- Which of the following statements did not happen in Jesse's lifetime?
  - Jesse learned to run fast at a very young age.
  - Jesse was born with natural talent and skill.
  - Jesse was finally accepted by Hitler as the winner.
  - Jesse broke many Olympic and world records.
- Which would be the best title for this passage?
 

a. "Hitler vs. Owens"	c. "Greatest Runner of All Time"
b. "The 1936 Olympics"	d. "The Inspiring Life of Jesse Owens"