

Name _____

The Unknown Winston Churchill

Sir Winston Churchill is known as one of the greatest leaders in world history. His courage rallied England during World War II at a time when Germany was conducting nighttime bombing raids over British cities, killing thousands of civilians and destroying tremendous amounts of property. But the private Winston Churchill was a man of varied hobbies who lived an exciting life outside of his major political role in saving Europe from Nazi Germany.

During the Boer War in 1899, a train he was traveling on was stopped when Boer commandos blocked the train rail with a massive boulder. He fought bravely but was captured and taken as a prisoner to Pretoria in enemy territory. He escaped by jumping a wall and hitching rides on trains. His dangerous escape made him a national hero.

He suffered from depression and painted to help overcome it. He mostly painted landscapes with oil paints. He once entered and won a painting contest for

anonymous painters. Many of his paintings hang today in galleries, and he is considered a very accomplished artist.

Churchill was also a world-renowned writer. Over the course of his life, he wrote many books and articles for magazines and newspapers. His most famous writings had to do with history. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1953, which is the highest award an author can receive.

In addition to being a famous writer and painter, he was also a bricklayer and built many structures. Although built sixty years ago or more, many of the buildings and walls still stand today. He also bred butterflies and loved small animals.

Soldier, escaped prisoner of war, statesman, artist, writer, and bricklayer—Winston Churchill is not only known for his abilities as a world leader but also because he was an amazing man of numerous talents.

Text Questions

- What does the word *structures* mean as it is used in the fifth paragraph?
 - organizations
 - arrangement of parts
 - buildings
 - the parts of an organism
- What is one of Churchill's greatest accomplishments as an author?
 - He wrote mostly about history.
 - He won the Nobel Prize in Literature.
 - He wrote articles for newspapers.
 - He wrote about his accomplishments during World War II.
- When was Churchill captured by the Boers?
 - in 1953
 - during World War II
 - during World War I
 - in 1899
- What is Winston Churchill most known for?
 - He was a great leader in world history.
 - He rallied England during World War I.
 - He escaped from capture in Pretoria.
 - He was an accomplished painter.
- Who do you consider to be one of the greatest leaders in history? Give reasons to support your answer.

Name _____

Lawrence of Arabia

The person referred to as “Lawrence of Arabia” was actually a British World War I army officer named Thomas Edward (T.E.) Lawrence. A movie made about his adventures won seven Academy Awards.

Lawrence was an archeologist and had traveled extensively in the Middle East prior to World War I. When the war broke out, he joined the British army to do some survey work, including some intelligence work spying for the British.

During the war, Lawrence fought with Arab troops in guerilla operations against the armed forces of the Ottoman Empire. He helped develop strategies that were vital to an Arab revolt in the area.

In addition to guerilla operations, Lawrence arranged and fought in three major battles, including the Battle of Aqaba—the first major victory for the Arab guerilla forces. Other major battles include the battle of Tafeleh and the Fall of Damascus. He was awarded medals and promoted to Colonel.

Despite his heroic exploits, Lawrence was mostly unnoticed. Even the Turks, who had a bounty for his death, did not know what he looked like. It wasn't until an American war correspondent gave a lecture series about Lawrence's achievements in the war that he became known as “Lawrence of Arabia.”

After the war, Lawrence refused a knighthood by the King of England. He became a close adviser to Winston Churchill and joined the Royal Navy under an assumed name due to all the publicity he received. Eventually, he had to resign due to spy activities attributed to him.

Lawrence had a love of motorcycles and owned many, but a motorcycle accident in 1935 took his life. He is considered the most famous British military figure in history.

Text Questions

1. What background knowledge would be helpful for understanding this text?
 - a. an understanding of what it means to be a knight
 - b. an understanding of events during World War I
 - c. knowledge about motorcycles
 - d. a viewing of an Academy Award-winning movie
2. What does the word *exploits* mean as it is used in the fifth paragraph?
 - a. deeds
 - b. speeches
 - c. profits
 - d. advertisements
3. According to the text, which of the following was not one of Lawrence's roles in the British military?
 - a. spy
 - b. colonel
 - c. developer of strategies
 - d. archaeologist
4. What can you infer about Lawrence in this biographical sketch?
 - a. He was a courageous person.
 - b. He didn't believe in fighting for the cause of the war.
 - c. He was loyal to the King of England.
 - d. He was a recluse.
5. Based on what you read, what do you think was Lawrence of Arabia's biggest contribution to history?

Name _____

Sir Thomas More

Sir Thomas More lived during a time of political change in England. The king had declared himself head of the Church of England, and More refused to acknowledge this transfer of power within the church. Instead, he stood up for his beliefs.

Prior to the King's declaration, Thomas More served as counselor, secretary, and confidant for Henry VIII. He practiced law but was also a scholar and a journalist. More had a good education and studied spiritual texts while preparing for his law career. Finally, he felt he must make a choice between a life of civil service and the monastic life. He moved to a monastery outside of London in 1503 and participated in the community as much as his legal career would allow. After a time, he once again felt the calling to civil service. More wanted to serve his country, so he left the monastery to enter Parliament just one year later. Eventually, he was elected as speaker of the House of Commons. During

the course of his career, he published novels as well as papers defending the Catholic church and lashing out against Martin Luther and the protestant revolution.

After the king disclosed his plans to divorce Catherine of Aragon to marry Anne Boleyn, More resigned from the House of Commons. He cited ill health as his reason, but most likely his decision came as much from his disapproval of the king's actions as anything else. More subsequently did not attend the coronation of the new queen, and the king did not view this favorably. The king's ire was further raised when More refused to swear to the Oath of Supremacy, which effectively declared King Henry as the head of the Church of England. He was found guilty of treason, sent to the tower, and beheaded a year later.

More's final words were, "The king's good servant, but God's first."

Text Questions

- What words could be used in the first paragraph in place of the phrase "stood up for his beliefs"?
 - defended his persuasion
 - defended his doubt
 - defended his convictions
 - defended his guilty sentence
- Which title would be a good alternative for this text?
 - "The King's Good Servant"
 - "A Monastic Life"
 - "A Man of Principle"
 - "Servant to All"
- What is the significance of More's choices?
 - He considered others less important than himself.
 - He made decisions based on what other people wanted him to do.
 - He thought only of what would serve his best interests.
 - He tried to stand up for what he thought was right.
- Which of the following does not describe a way in which Thomas More served Henry VIII?
 - He was secretary to the king.
 - He refused to support the king's declarations.
 - He was an adviser to the king.
 - He was the king's confidant.
- What significance do More's last words hold for people today?

Name _____

Olympic Inspiration

The 2012 Olympic Games in London was a year for gold. Katie Ledecky, the youngest member of the United States Olympic swim team, took gold in the 800m freestyle. She credits her win, in part, to being inspired by watching Michael Phelps and Missy Franklin win gold.

Katie worked diligently the year prior to the Olympic Games. She balanced training and ninth grade, winning the 800m in two pre-Olympic Games events. Katie gained confidence and speed during training camp prior to the Olympic Games.

During the games, Katie focused her thoughts on world records and the medals her teammates won. She wanted to do well for her country. In an interview,

Katie said watching Phelps and Franklin win was very exciting, but she kept it to herself and “just used it as extra energy.”

During the race, Ledecky got off to a dynamic start and soon was an entire body-length ahead. Phelps summed up the race by commenting that Katie had fun, nearly broke a world record, and won the gold. He felt that was pretty impressive for a fifteen-year-old.

Katie continues to swim and train at swim clubs near her home in Maryland. She recently won the 2013 U.S. Olympic Committee Sportswoman of the Year award. In addition, she has won four gold medals at the World Championships and broken two world records. Some news reports have called Katie a “hometown hero.”

Text Questions

1. On which aspect of Katie's career does this passage focus?
 - a. her training
 - b. details of every race she has won
 - c. her experience at the 2012 Olympic Games in London
 - d. her hopes and goals for the future
2. How did Phelps and Franklin inspire Katie to win gold?
 - a. They cheered her on during the race.
 - b. Their wins excited her and gave her extra energy.
 - c. They helped her during training.
 - d. They showed her how to have an edge over the competition.
3. Which paragraph summarizes Katie's Olympic Games race?
 - a. the first paragraph
 - b. the second paragraph
 - c. the third paragraph
 - d. the fourth paragraph
4. What does it mean in the second paragraph to say that Katie worked *diligently*?
 - a. She persevered and kept working.
 - b. She worked carefully.
 - c. She made sure everything was done correctly.
 - d. She studied to learn everything she could about swimming.
5. Why might news reporters call Katie a “hometown hero”? In what ways do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Name _____

Harry S. Truman, U.S. President

When people think of a United States president, they typically think of someone who is highly educated and from a family of successful people. Harry Truman, the 33rd president, lived a humble life until thrust into the United States Senate at age 50 without a formal college education. He became vice president in 1945 and then president that same year after President Franklin Roosevelt died in office. He was the last president not to have a college degree.

Truman was born into a farming family in Missouri. As a child, he loved the piano, becoming proficient and playing regularly the rest of his life. After graduating high school, he started working and had a succession of jobs that included being a railroad timekeeper and a mailroom clerk for a newspaper. After his military service, he started a business, which ultimately failed.

In 1917, Truman joined the army to serve in World War I. He was captain of an artillery unit and showed

exceptional leadership and courage. One time during battle, the Germans attacked, and his men began to turn and flee. He was able to rally them to turn and fight. After that, he had undivided loyalty from his men.

He showed that same determination as president. Taking over during World War II, he immediately faced immense difficulties. Through courage and homespun wisdom, he was able to help guide the war to a successful end. His decision to use atomic weapons against Japan was perhaps the single most difficult decision a president has ever had to make. He led the world in the post-war era providing food, clothing, and hope to much of Europe.

Harry Truman serves as a reminder that difficulties in life can be overcome and that one can achieve great things in spite of setbacks and trials.

Text Questions

1. What is one fact from Truman's life that sets him apart from other presidents in recent history?
 - a. He had a job before becoming president.
 - b. He served in the U.S. Senate.
 - c. He did not have a college degree.
 - d. He served in the military.
2. What is one example of Truman's leadership abilities?
 - a. He inspired his men to turn and fight while under German attack.
 - b. He played the piano well.
 - c. He was not accepted into West Point.
 - d. He had a successful business after the war.
3. Which statement from the text best explains Truman's success as president?
 - a. He became vice president in 1945.
 - b. He became president that same year after President Franklin Roosevelt died in office.
 - c. Taking over during World War II, he immediately faced immense difficulties.
 - d. Through courage and homespun wisdom, he was able to help guide the war to a successful end.
4. Which is a synonym for the word *exceptional* as it is used in the third paragraph?
 - a. uncommon
 - b. unbelievable
 - c. rare
 - d. outstanding
5. What do you think made Truman's decision to use atomic weapons so difficult?

Name _____

Man of Finance

Many Americans seek success, but very few make it into the history books. Even fewer become known and remembered for their positive contributions to the development of their country. John Pierpont ("J.P.") Morgan was considered a master of finance and is still considered one of America's leading businessmen.

Morgan got a glimpse into his future early in life, as he learned the language of banking and studied at a leading private financial house in New York. The son of a banker, he followed his father into the family business. He went on to become a well-known financier. In 1871, he founded a private banking company, which later became known as J.P. Morgan & Company. Over time, Morgan learned to make wise financial decisions, including investing in the emerging electricity industry. During times of depression and financial crisis, the government requested help from Morgan's company.

During the period in which Morgan lived, people scrutinized the few who had wealth and power. They

accused J.P. Morgan of creating monopolies, which made it difficult for other businesses to compete in the market. It's true that he invested heavily in the railroad industry, as well as founding the U.S. National Steel Corporation.

Finance didn't consume Morgan's entire life, however. An avid sailor, he was a member of a yacht club and a participant in America's Cup races. As one of the founders of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Morgan also enjoyed collecting art, eventually donating his collection to the museum. He also played a role in organizing the Museum of Natural History. Morgan made private donations as well, in one instance donating money toward the construction of a new hospital building.

At the time of his death in 1913, Morgan was considered an influential financier. His influence continues even today, not only in the finance company that bears his name, but also in the concept of corporate power and wealth.

Text Questions

- Which of the following is not an industry in which J.P. Morgan invested?
 - electricity
 - railroads
 - steel
 - plastic
- Which statement from the text gives a clue about a major influence in Morgan's career?
 - The son of a banker, he followed his father into the family business.
 - During times of depression and financial crisis, the government requested help from Morgan's company.
 - During the period in which Morgan lived, people scrutinized the few who had wealth and power.
 - He invested heavily in the railroad industry, as well as founding the U.S. National Steel Corporation.
- What is the main idea of the fourth paragraph?
 - It describes Morgan's early life.
 - It explains Morgan's role in the development of corporate business in America.
 - It describes Morgan's interests outside of finance.
 - It explains what made J.P. Morgan so successful.
- Which is a synonym for the word *crisis* as it is used in the second paragraph?
 - dilemma
 - emergency
 - plight
 - decision
- Based on what you read, what might be considered J.P. Morgan's greatest contribution to our economy?

Name _____

Stronger Than Steel

Many inventions are renowned for their role in improving quality of life or for helping people. Stephanie Kwolek contributed to both with her invention of Kevlar®. At first, Kwolek wanted to study medicine. After earning a degree in chemistry, she took a temporary research position. Kwolek became so intrigued, she decided to pursue a career in the area of chemical research.

Her work and discoveries with polymers led to the creation of a material five times stronger than steel. The material was named Kevlar. It came about through a combination of experimenting with polymers, heat, and spinning various substances. When tested, the new polymer proved to be very lightweight, yet extremely strong. Resistant to fire and other types of corrosion,

it is the primary component of bulletproof vests. As such, it helps save the lives of countless soldiers and law enforcement officers. Many people don't realize, however, that Kevlar is also used in other products. Safety helmets, skis, and hunting and camping gear all make use of Kevlar. Not surprisingly, it is also used in suspension bridge cables, and in sea and space technology as well.

Kwolek has received numerous awards for her work and patents. Today, she is retired and enjoys her hobbies, as well as speaking with students about her invention. Kwolek likes to tell her audiences, "Every person has value, no matter what you do. This is what you have to remember."

Text Questions

1. What does the word *corrosion* mean as it is used in the second paragraph?
 - a. extreme heat sources
 - b. wearing away due to chemical reactions
 - c. a substance formed from a long chain of simple molecules
 - d. multiple liquids stirred together
2. Which was not one of Kwolek's goals in life?
 - a. to study medicine
 - b. to work in chemical research
 - c. to help people and improve their quality of life
 - d. to build suspension bridges
3. Why might Kevlar be a good material for safety helmets?
 - a. It is bulletproof and fire resistant.
 - b. It has a smooth, shiny finish.
 - c. It is inexpensive to manufacture.
 - d. It can withstand heat.
4. Which of the following was a key factor in the invention of Kevlar?
 - a. Some important people walked into the lab on the right day.
 - b. It passed military tests.
 - c. It resulted from a combination of experimenting with polymers, heat, and spinning various substances.
 - d. Kwolek was a research intern at a chemical company.
5. What might a student find significant about Kwolek's quote, "Every person has value, no matter what you do"?

Name _____

Just an Ordinary Guy

Louis Sachar, the author of *Holes*, is just an ordinary person. He spent part of his childhood in New York, but his family moved to California while he was still in elementary school. While living in New York, his father worked on the 78th floor of the Empire State Building. Sachar says this may have been the inspiration for the Wayside School.

Sachar studied economics in college. He received a flier on campus one day that offered college credit in exchange for helping out as a teacher's aide at a local elementary school. Sachar thought it sounded like a good way to obtain free credit, so he signed up. It quickly became his favorite college class. He helped in classrooms and on the playground as a lunch supervisor. Sachar says that the kids in his books are based on kids he knew while working at that school.

After college, Sachar got a job at a warehouse. During this time he wrote his first book, *Sideways Stories from Wayside School*. It took him almost a year to write the book, which was accepted by a publisher during his first week at law school. He passed the bar exam and then did part-time legal work. He went on to practice law, continuing to write children's books in the evenings. Nearly ten years later, Sachar was making enough money from the sales of his books to leave the law profession and devote himself to writing full-time.

One of Sachar's most well-known works, *Holes*, won a Newbery Award in 1999. Sachar says when he started writing the book, it was more about the place than the characters. As he wrote, the characters became more developed. It took him a year and a half to write the book, the same length of time Stanley was sentenced to Camp Green Lake.

Text Questions

- Where did Louis Sachar receive the inspiration for his stories?
 - from the books he read
 - from things that happened in his life
 - from his job
 - from his teachers
- Based on the text, what can you infer about the author of *Holes*?
 - He doesn't have a strong understanding of childhood behavior.
 - He had an unhappy childhood.
 - He finds inspiration for his books from real-life events.
 - He enjoys writing books about law schools.
- Which statement is not true?
 - There is a real Wayside school building that is sideways.
 - Sachar helped in classrooms and on the playground as a lunch supervisor.
 - It took Sachar a year and a half to write *Holes*.
 - One of Sachar's most well-known works, *Holes*, won a Newbery Award in 1999.
- What does the word *inspiration* mean as it is used in the first paragraph?
 - breathing
 - something supernatural
 - an action that prompts a reaction
 - something that influences someone to do something creative
- After reading this passage, what can you learn from Sachar about success?

Name _____

Woman of Justice

In an arena historically dominated by males, Sandra Day O'Connor had the honor of being the first woman nominated to serve on the Supreme Court. President Reagan nominated her in 1981, and she served until her retirement in 2006.

Justice O'Connor held a variety of positions as she gained legal and political experience. Early in her career, she served as Deputy Attorney General. O'Connor served as a civilian attorney in Germany and later as Assistant Attorney General for the state of Arizona. She served three terms as an Arizona state senator. From there, she continued to move up within the court system, serving as judge of a county Superior Court and then, a few years later, she was appointed to the Arizona Court of Appeals. Throughout her career, O'Connor remained active in civic and cultural organizations.

During her career, O'Connor earned a reputation as a moderate conservative. She often played an important role in key decisions affecting the justice system. She

believes that justices are limited to the duties of the judicial branch, without their authority extending to executive or legislative roles. That is, justices do not create laws, nor do they implement or enforce laws. The role of the judicial branch is to interpret the law and apply it to cases of dispute. Although the Supreme Court spends much time determining whether or not laws are in fact constitutional, that power and authority is not granted in the Constitution. Many of the duties set forth in the Constitution refer to cases and rights between states or between the federal government and other parties.

In retirement, O'Connor has expressed her opinion that judges should not be elected. Rather, they should be appointed based on merit. She believes this would lead to better-qualified judges. O'Connor developed an interactive website program to teach middle-school students about the court system. Sandra Day O'Connor continues to make a positive impact in the lives of Americans.

Text Questions

- Which is a synonym for the word *moderate* as it is used in the third paragraph?
 - tolerant
 - inexpensive
 - radical
 - average
- Which position provided Sandra Day O'Connor with political experience?
 - Deputy Attorney General
 - civilian attorney
 - Arizona State Senator
 - Arizona Court of Appeals
- Throughout her career, how did Justice O'Connor approach legal decisions?
 - as a conservative
 - as a moderate conservative
 - as a moderate liberal
 - as a liberal
- Based on this passage, why might Sandra Day O'Connor have been nominated to the position of Supreme Court Justice?
 - She knew the president.
 - She had experience as a civilian attorney overseas.
 - She was active in civic and cultural organizations.
 - She had a wide range of experience, both political and legal, and had risen up within the court system.
- Based on what you read and any background knowledge you have, do you agree or disagree with O'Connor's opinion regarding the role of a Supreme Court Justice? Give reasons to support your answer.

Name _____

The Father of Public Libraries

Few “rags to riches” stories compare to that of Andrew Carnegie, a Scottish immigrant who later became one of the most famous and wealthy industrialists of his time. He was born in Scotland in 1835. The son of a weaver, his family expected him to follow in his father’s steps. However, the Industrial Revolution changed their plans. Mechanized looms replaced weavers, and Andrew’s father had to beg for work. Carnegie vowed that when he was older, he would rise up out of poverty. At the same time, Carnegie learned from relatives about equality in the workforce and the rights of common workers.

Carnegie’s family fled to America to seek better opportunities. Carnegie began his career among the working class, taking jobs in factories and the telegraph industry. In each job he held, Carnegie did his best. He embraced new and greater responsibilities. In time, he followed a coworker from the telegraph office into the railroad business. He worked for the railroads

throughout the Civil War. After the war, Carnegie realized the potential of iron and steel. He resigned from the railroad to work for a bridge company before investing in the steel industry. Carnegie was willing to take incredible risks for the ideas and technology in which he believed. He said workers should form unions to protect their rights. However, Carnegie pushed his employees to work long hours for low wages. After working in the steel business for several years, he sold his company to J.P. Morgan.

Carnegie believed it was a disgrace to die rich. He turned his efforts to giving away his millions. Acting on his opinions that people should help themselves, he supported institutions of higher learning. Carnegie also established over two thousand libraries. He valued peace and built a “palace of peace” in the Netherlands that would later become an international court. Before he died, Carnegie gave away over 350 million dollars, a fortune even by today’s standards.

Text Questions

1. What is one thing that might be said of Andrew Carnegie?
 - a. He wasn’t willing to put forth the effort.
 - b. Sometimes his actions didn’t match his words.
 - c. He was too short-sighted and didn’t make wise investments.
 - d. He supported slavery during the Civil War.
2. From the passage, you can infer that . . .
 - a. Carnegie’s investment in the steel industry was a risk.
 - b. Carnegie didn’t support unions.
 - c. Carnegie made most of his money working in a factory as a laborer.
 - d. Carnegie supported charities.
3. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
 - a. It introduces Carnegie’s background and family life.
 - b. It explains why Carnegie was a successful businessman.
 - c. It describes Carnegie’s business career.
 - d. It describes the ways in which Carnegie invested his money in helping people.
4. What do you think Carnegie meant when he said it was a *disgrace* to die rich?
 - a. A person loses the respect of others if he has wealth and doesn’t help others with it.
 - b. People who are rich often behave poorly.
 - c. People who die rich are typically dishonest.
 - d. Their family would be unworthy of receiving the inheritance.
5. What can you apply to your own life from reading biographies about people such as Andrew Carnegie?

Name _____

Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister

Our younger years often help form our beliefs, and our experiences affect how we choose to live. Such is the case with Margaret Thatcher. She became the first woman to lead a western democracy. Thatcher grew up in a close community that had strong values. She learned self-reliance, honesty, and the value of charitable work. Thatcher took chemistry classes in college, but she had a greater interest in politics. While growing up, her father served as a counselor in their community and discussed current events and issues with her. Thatcher went to college at Oxford, where she was elected president of a student association. This was the beginning of her political experience.

Thatcher ran for the Labor seat at Dartford. She lost both times she ran but enjoyed the campaign and displayed strong public-speaking skills. She went on to train as a lawyer and was later elected to Parliament.

Thatcher held a variety of political offices. She gained further experience as Education Minister. Five years later, she was elected as the leader of the Conservative party. The Conservatives won the majority in Parliament in 1979, and the next day, Margaret Thatcher became the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

During her terms of political leadership, Margaret Thatcher helped revive the economy. She spoke out against the mindset of decline that had prevailed since World War II, and she helped reshape the nation's foreign policy. Her reforms and policies contributed to the spread of democracy and the growth of free markets during the period following the Cold War. Even though Thatcher's leadership role was controversial, today she is viewed as an influential and respected world leader.

Text Questions

- Which of the following is not an area in which Margaret Thatcher was influential?
 - economic reforms
 - foreign policy
 - democratic ideals
 - space exploration
- Based on the passage, what can you conclude about Margaret Thatcher?
 - She didn't understand economics.
 - She was concerned about the welfare of her country.
 - She wanted to become famous.
 - She struggled to maintain her grades in college.
- What does the word *decline* mean as it is used in the third paragraph?
 - deterioration
 - rejection
 - acceptance
 - descending
- What background and experience did Thatcher bring to her role as prime minister?
 - daughter of a counselor
 - elected to Parliament
 - lawyer
 - all of the above
- As a female political leader, what are some ways Margaret Thatcher might have a lasting influence?

Name _____

Author of Adventure

A brief review of Gary Paulsen's life shows why he is such a prolific writer. When he was young, a librarian handed him a book and showed him how to obtain a library card. From that point on, Gary became an avid reader. He spent hours reading alone, which may have fueled his taste for adventure. Paulsen ran away from home at age 14 and traveled with a carnival. Add to that a summer of farm chores and two runs in an Alaskan dogsled race. Throw into the mix various jobs including engineer, construction worker, truck driver, and sailor. With his diverse history, Paulsen has a wealth of experiences from which to draw on to write his stories.

Taking a big risk, Paulsen left a job as a satellite technician to pursue the field of writing. He worked as a magazine proofreader while working on his own

writing at night. Later, he moved from California to Minnesota, renting a cabin by a lake. There, he wrote his first novel. During this time living in the woods, Paulsen tried his hand at dog racing. When forced to give up his dogs due to his health, Paulsen began to put the same energy he had devoted to dog training into his writing. According to Paulsen, he stays focused when he works, not doing anything else, which explains the number of books he has published.

Paulsen observes closely and cares about the world around him. He encourages his readers to do the same. These characteristics, along with his belief in young people, make him a popular author. Three of his books—*Hatchet*, *Dogsong*, and *The Winter Room*—have won Newbery Awards. With over 175 books published, Paulsen leaves readers with a lasting legacy.

Text Questions

1. What likely inspired Paulsen to write stories about survival in the wilderness?
 - a. He worked as an engineer.
 - b. He lived in the north Minnesota woods.
 - c. He liked to read.
 - d. He won awards for his writing.
2. Which is a synonym for the word *legacy* as it is used in the last paragraph?
 - a. gift
 - b. money
 - c. property
 - d. bequest
3. Which characteristics make Gary Paulsen a popular young-adult author?
 - a. He carefully observes the world in which he lives.
 - b. He has had a wide variety of experiences.
 - c. He believes in young people.
 - d. all of the above
4. Which of the following is not true about Paulsen's early life?
 - a. He was an avid reader.
 - b. He did chores on a farm.
 - c. He sailed on the ocean with his father.
 - d. He ran away from home to work with a circus.
5. Based on what you read in the passage, what might inspire you to read a book written by Gary Paulsen?

Name _____

Pelé

Edson Arantes do Nascimento is known to the world as Pelé. He is considered by many experts to be the greatest soccer player in history. Pelé was named the Co-Player of the Century in 1999 by FIFA.

Pelé was born in Brazil and played professionally there for two decades. His performance in the 1958 World Cup made him a soccer legend. The national team won three World Cups during the time he played with them. Later in his career, Pelé joined a team in the North American Soccer League.

His father struggled to earn a living as a soccer player. That didn't stop Pelé from trying the game, even after growing up in poverty. No one knows for sure how he got the nickname "Pelé," but he had the name from the time he kicked a sock filled with rags in the streets.

While playing on a youth team in Brazil, his coach suggested he try out for the Santos professional soccer club. Pelé was 15 and scored his first goal within the

year. He went on to score many more goals for his team. Based on his performance, he was recruited to play for the national team. Pelé was a key player in Brazil's World Cup win in 1958, and he also helped the team win even more championships.

After Pelé joined the New York Cosmos, he helped make soccer more popular in the United States. His final game was an exhibition game between New York and Santos. In that game, he competed for both sides. Over the course of Pelé's career, he scored 1,283 goals!

Since retiring from soccer in 1977, he has continued to stay busy. Pelé has served as Brazil's Minister for Sport, and he has been a United Nations ambassador for ecology and the environment. In 1975, Pelé also won the International Peace Award for his work with UNICEF.

It's easy to see why at one point in his career, Pelé was named Brazil's "national treasure."

Text Questions

1. In what year did Pelé help the Brazilian team win the World Cup?
 - a. 1940
 - b. 1958
 - c. 1974
 - d. 1977
2. Which factor has probably not contributed to Pelé's popularity?
 - a. He used to kick a sock filled with rags in the streets.
 - b. Pelé joined the New York Cosmos, which helped make soccer more popular in the United States.
 - c. In his final exhibition game between New York and Santos, Pelé competed for both sides.
 - d. Over the course of Pelé's career, he scored over 1,200 goals.
3. How much time does two *decades* represent?
 - a. two years
 - b. ten years
 - c. twenty years
 - d. forty years
4. In which paragraph can you read about Pelé's contributions to humanity?
 - a. in the first paragraph
 - b. in the second paragraph
 - c. in the fourth paragraph
 - d. in the sixth paragraph
5. What can you learn from this inspirational sports figure?

Name _____

Harland David Sanders

Harland David Sanders is better known to most as Colonel Sanders, the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Harland Sanders was born in a small shack in September of 1890. Six years later his father died, leaving Harland to watch over his siblings while his mother entered the workforce. His duties at home included cooking, and within a year, he had begun to develop quite an aptitude as a cook. Following his mother's remarriage, he left home and subsequently dropped out of school in his early teens.

Throughout his life, he worked a wide variety of odd jobs. He was a farmer, insurance salesman, mule tender, and among other things, a political candidate. While working at one of his jobs as a service-station operator, he began cooking chicken. He sold it as part of a boxed meal for hungry travelers who stopped in for gas.

His food became so popular that he was listed in the popular restaurant guide *Adventures to Good Eating*.

In 1935, the governor made him a Kentucky Colonel for his contributions to regional cooking. Less than five years later, he purchased a motel and restaurant. Within a year, he had perfected his "secret recipe" for pressure-cooked chicken, but when World War II broke out, he lost most of his business and was forced to close.

After the war, he franchised his Kentucky Fried Chicken for the first time. Sanders spent the next several years developing his business. After one of his restaurants failed due to low traffic flow, Sanders began franchising in earnest.

He became the first fast-food owner to expand internationally. At one point, there were 600 restaurants. He eventually sold the chain of restaurants and traveled thousands of miles each year as a goodwill ambassador for the franchise.

Success came late in life for Colonel Sanders, and he gave heavily back to charities. Even today, over thirty years after his death, his trusts continue to provide money for charities and scholarships.

Text Questions

1. What inspired Harland Sanders to develop a chicken recipe?
 - a. His siblings' favorite food was chicken.
 - b. He learned to cook chicken while working on a farm.
 - c. While working at a service station, he sold cooked chicken as part of a boxed meal.
 - d. He knew he would be able to franchise his recipe and sell it to many people.
2. Which word best characterizes Harland Sanders?
 - a. lazy
 - b. procrastinator
 - c. persistent
 - d. greedy
3. Which of the following is true about Harland Sanders' life?
 - a. He watched over his siblings and helped at home with the cooking while his mother entered the workforce.
 - b. His recipe for cooking chicken failed miserably.
 - c. After one of his restaurants failed due to low traffic flow, Sanders gave up on his dream of franchising.
 - d. Success came early in life for Colonel Sanders.
4. What does the word *franchise* mean as it is used in the text?
 - a. freedom from restriction
 - b. a special right or exemption granted by the government
 - c. the right to vote
 - d. the right to market a product in a specific area
5. What can we learn from reading about Harland Sanders and his life?

Name _____

Walt Disney's Greatest Storyman

Sometimes we think more about how animation is created than the people behind the scenes. Bill Peet has written and illustrated over thirty books for children, and he is one of the major storytellers behind well-known animated movies.

Bill Peet began to develop his creative abilities at a young age. Peet grew up in Indianapolis, near the edge of the city, with access to the countryside. He also had the opportunity to visit his grandfather's farm, which bordered wilderness. Those experiences, combined with trips to the zoo, provided the foundation for future drawings of animals. When Peet entered school, his constant drawing sometimes became a problem, although one teacher encouraged his drawing. He dared to dream of a career in which he could put his drawing habit to use. He won a scholarship to an art school after high school and studied there for three years.

After art school, Peet needed to figure out a way to earn a living. He heard that Walt Disney was looking for

artists, so he moved to California. There, Peet sketched and planned screen stories. He eventually became a storyman. Animated movies are made up of many individual drawings. Peet did the complete storyboards for two movies, *The Sword in the Stone* and *101 Dalmatians*. He also worked on *Peter Pan*, *Dumbo*, and *The Jungle Book*.

Peet's children's stories began as bedtime stories for his sons. He illustrated his stories with many animals and some people, too. Peet claims the reason for this is he loves to draw animals.

Bill Peet used different media for his drawings. He drew in pastels, pencils, and ballpoint pen. He dabbled in oil painting for a brief time. Many of his book illustrations are done in colored pencils and ink.

Two of Peet's animated works won awards. He's more well-known, though, as "Walt Disney's Greatest Storyman."

Text Questions

- Based on the passage, which of the following movies did Bill Peet not work on?
 - A Bug's Life*
 - Dumbo*
 - 101 Dalmatians*
 - The Jungle Book*
- What does the word *access* mean as it is used in the second paragraph?
 - able to approach
 - a way of using something
 - the ability to get to a place
 - to retrieve data from a computer
- What inspired Bill Peet's drawings of animals?
 - the countryside near his home
 - his grandfather's farm and wilderness
 - visits to the zoo
 - all of the above
- What characteristic might have contributed to Disney's acceptance of Peet as a main storyman?
 - his high-school drawings
 - his ability to write and illustrate stories
 - his growing up in the city
 - his oil paintings
- How can your passions and abilities relate to possible careers in the real world? Give examples to support your answer.

Name _____

Barbara McClintock, Nobel Prize Winner

Our current understanding of genetics is rooted in the study of plants. While a student at Cornell University, Barbara McClintock took biology classes and the only genetics course available. She expressed a great interest in her learning. The professor then invited her to attend his second course, offered only to graduate students. She studied the behavior of chromosomes and decided to pursue an advanced degree. She would study chromosomes and their genetic content for the remainder of her career.

During her career, McClintock taught botany at Cornell and went on to become a research associate. She later taught at other universities and worked with an agricultural science program as a consultant. After earning her Ph.D., McClintock received fellowships from various schools. This enabled her to continue her studies and research. She received honorary degrees and awards of achievement from several institutions. Perhaps her most prestigious award was when she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1983.

Barbara McClintock worked with chromosomes and genes in maize. She focused on the relationship between plant reproduction and how some plants mutated. She discovered that chromosomes could jump during plant breeding. This means that genes can change positions on the chromosome. After more research, McClintock proved that certain genes could turn physical characteristics—such as the color of leaves—on or off. Scientists later discovered a relationship between McClintock's research on genetic mutations and bacteria that develop resistance to antibiotics. Such research helps us better understand how viruses and bacteria act.

Although her early work gained recognition in the scientific community, her later research on genetics was not initially well received. Only later, when her discoveries were confirmed by molecular biologists, did she receive additional honors. Described by a friend as a solitary person, Barbara McClintock focused her life on her research, which was her passion.

Text Questions

- You can tell from the context of the passage that the word *chromosome* means . . .
 - the colored part of a plant.
 - the part of the cell nucleus that carries the genes responsible for hereditary characteristics.
 - something that makes bacteria resistant to antibiotics.
 - something that causes a virus.
- Which was Barbara McClintock's most notable award?
 - The Merit Award
 - MacArthur Foundation Grant
 - National Medal of Science
 - Nobel Prize
- Which statement from the text best describes McClintock's research?
 - She discovered that genes can change positions on the chromosome.
 - She received honorary degrees and awards of achievement from several institutions.
 - She studied the behavior of chromosomes and decided to pursue an advanced degree.
 - Barbara McClintock was a solitary person.
- What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
 - It describes McClintock's educational background.
 - It provides details about her scientific career.
 - It explains her research and its implications for science and medicine.
 - It describes the honors and awards she received.
- Based on what you read, what contributions did Barbara McClintock make to science and medicine?

