

Sample Pages from

Brain Teasers for Young Scholars

By Margaret Whisnant



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In order to engage in effective communication,
young scholars must learn and practice the rules that govern language—
parts of speech, sentence construction, capitalization, punctuation, etc.

During the process,
many observant students will uncover language's other personality

as
a source of entertainment,
a tease,
an intriguing puzzle,
a **toy** waiting to be taken apart and reassembled.

Brain candy!

So here's a whole box full!

Begin at the beginning, start in the middle,
or sneak a look at the last page first.

Ready! Set! ***Cogitate!*** *

***cogitate** (kŏj' ĩ tāt) *v* to think hard or carefully; ponder; meditate; to turn over in one's mind

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O, I C!

Use letters (or a single letter) from the alphabet to phonetically form the answers to the following questions. Letters may **not** be used to **spell** a word. Only the spoken **sound** of a letter is allowed.

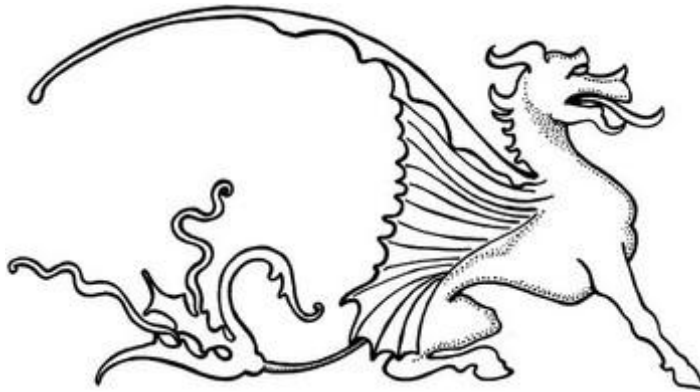
Example: These letters are what a person might say when he/she understands something for the first time. (Answer: O, I C)

- _____ 1. These two letters mean *to rot*.
- _____ 2. These two letters are a companion to *jealousy*.
- _____ 3. This letter is the name of a large body of water.
- _____ 4. This letter asks "For what purpose?"
- _____ 5. These two letters describe the condition of having or doing too much.
- _____ 6. A nickname for *Arthur* or *Artemus* can be formed with these two letters.
- _____ 7. These two letters name the type of doll given as a prize at a carnival.
- _____ 8. These letters describe a day experiencing frozen precipitation.
- _____ 9. These two letters are a reaction to a bad smell.
- _____ 10. This letter names a popular beverage served both hot and cold.
- _____ 11. What two letters mean the opposite of *full*?
- _____ 12. These two letters are the opposite of *difficult*.

Connections

Set 1

Add **ONE WORD** to each of the three items in the lists below to form a familiar word or phrase. The mystery word can be placed **before** or **after** the clues. Write the word that makes the connection in the blank to the left.



- Example:** fly dragon horse house
- _____ 1. movie shooting north
- _____ 2. cream cube black
- _____ 3. flower spot rise
- _____ 4. ring lobe ache
- _____ 5. man sonic size
- _____ 6. fall ski bottled
- _____ 7. map winding runner
- _____ 8. scotch video red
- _____ 9. station natural line
- _____ 10. call cell card
- _____ 11. ball hot race
- _____ 12. tidal length heat
- _____ 13. night bulb flash
- _____ 14. diamond bathtub wedding
- _____ 15. fly place rapid

Animal Talk

Set 1

Throughout the centuries, animals have been our helpers, devoted companions, and means of survival. Our relationship with them is mirrored in many of the expressions and figures of speech we use to endear, poke fun, name a song, criticize, or just add a little extra flavor to our vocabulary.

Fill in the blank in each item below with the name of an animal.



Example: go on a wild goose chase

1. _____-eared pages in a book
2. walking _____ toed
3. the black _____ of the family
4. used as a scape _____
5. take a _____ nap
6. _____ wrench
7. copy _____
8. _____ sense
9. the _____ of peace
10. circling like a _____
11. _____ whistle
12. _____ walk (*an exercise*)
13. _____ hug
14. have a _____ lick
in your hair
15. hit the _____'s eye
16. snug as a _____ in a rug
17. to make a _____ line for
18. Be quiet! _____ up!
19. more fun than a barrel of

20. _____ brain
21. There's something _____
going on.
22. a big _____ in a little
pond
23. sly as a _____
24. _____ tired
25. a _____ in the
grass
26. playing _____

Words to Color

Set 1

Fill in the blank in each item below with the name of a color. When necessary, put your research skills to work.

Example:

red alert

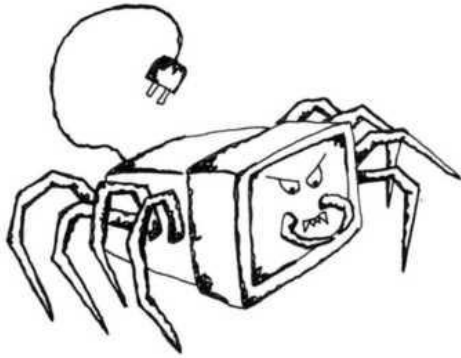


1. _____ tie affair
2. _____ bullet
3. _____ jacket
4. A _____ light means *go*.
5. A _____ light means *stop*.
6. A _____ light means *caution*.
7. *Men in _____*. (movie)
8. the deep _____ sea
9. ever _____
10. knight on a _____ horse
11. *The _____ Bells of Scotland*
(song)
12. _____ horn
13. *The _____ Bug* (book)
14. *The Little _____ Hen*
15. 14K _____
16. as hard to hold as quick _____
17. *We All Live in a _____*
Submarine (song)
18. Texas _____ bonnet
19. *Shades of _____* (book)
20. the California _____ rush
21. *Snow _____ and the Seven*
Dwarfs
22. in a _____ mood
23. pea _____
24. _____ tea
25. *One-eyed, One-horned Flying*
_____ *People Eater* (song)

Categories

Set 1

Four items in each of the following groups are related in some way. They all fit into a particular **category**. One of the items is different from the other four. Circle the item that does not belong. In the blank write the **specific category** that connects the other four.



Example:

Hewlett-Packard

Scorpio

Dell

Compaq

Apple

computer brand names

1. fish
seagull
coral
whale
lobster
-

2. lumber
bricks
steel
gold
nails
-

3. Washington
New Hampshire
Chicago
Georgia
Michigan
-

4. house
boat
igloo
trailer
wheelbarrow
-

5. clarinet
saxophone
flute
violin
oboe
-

6. coffee
cocoa
milkshake
tea
apple cider
-

7. apple
orange
banana
strawberry
tangerine
-

8. baseball
football
soccer
ice hockey
volleyball
-

9. swimming
golf
baseball
skiing
ice skating
-

10. cat
dog
rabbit
cow
gerbil
-

11. box
kettle
bongo
snare
base
-

12. violin
flute
guitar
banjo
harp
-

Velcro Words

Set 1

One of the many creative things we have done with our language is to stick certain words together so that they are generally thought of in pairs—*salt* and *pepper*, for example. Furthermore, there is an unwritten rule that one word always comes first. It is acceptable to experience *ups* and *downs*, but *downs* and *ups* are not allowed.

Here's a chance to see how many Velcro Words have found their way into your vocabulary. Fill in the blank in each item with the missing word. Some can have more than one answer.

Example:



Example: hunt and peck

1. peaches and _____
2. thunder and _____
3. _____ and needles
4. bacon and _____
5. _____ and stones
6. sick and _____
7. mind your *p*'s and _____
8. raining _____ and dogs
9. aunt and _____
10. song and _____
11. _____ and loss
12. shoes and _____
13. _____ and effect
14. sweet and _____ sauce
15. _____ and fries
16. come and _____

17. _____ and cons
18. _____ and soul
19. hope and _____
20. forgive and _____
21. now and _____
22. _____ and marriage
23. brother and _____
24. _____ and *don'ts*
25. peanut butter and _____

Verbal Hors d'oeuvres

Set 1

The idiomatic expressions ingrained in our language enable us to communicate with a liveliness that would be impossible without them. Our love of verbal games adds color, sound, action, and run-away visuals to our everyday speech. We have managed to mix **food** into our vocabulary, making it **tasty** as well.

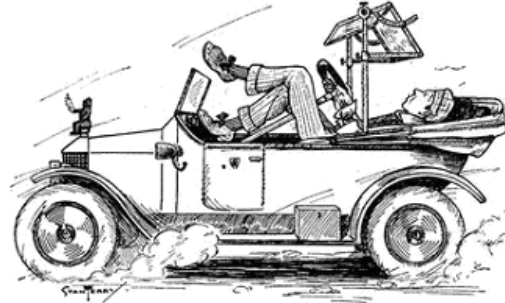
Each of the following sentences requires the addition of the name of a **food**. Write the correct missing morsel in the blank.

Warning: This activity could whet your appetite and cause you to read a whole novel.

Example:

My brother is a shameless _____ behind the wheel. He should be banned from driving forever.

Answer: hot dog



- _____ 1. I bragged that my favorite team would win the tournament. Now I have to eat humble _____.
- _____ 2. The science test was a piece of _____. I knew every question.
- _____ 3. Dad drove the SUV over my bicycle and smashed it as flat as a _____.
- _____ 4. Ms. Kirby packed us on the bus like _____ and then took us on a wonderful bug-hunting expedition in the park.
- _____ 5. Grandpa tells one _____ joke after another, but he always makes me laugh.
- _____ 6. My parents call each other "_____." If the bees knew, would they approve?
- _____ 7. Last one in the pool is a rotten _____!
- _____ 8. Instead of giving a normal oral report like everybody else, Jamal decided to _____ it up. He was a hit.
- _____ 9. My whole family was in a _____ over the lost keys until I spotted them hanging in the car's ignition.
- _____ 10. Outmaneuvering my sister in a game of chess is like taking _____ from a baby.
- _____ 11. If you want to drive Mr. Roland _____, go to his desk and say "*I don't have no pencil. Can I borrow one?*"
- _____ 12. An afternoon without homework is just my cup of _____.
- _____ 13. Calvin's new joke laid an _____, but I'm sure he'll have another one by tomorrow.
- _____ 14. If you don't study, you won't know _____ about tomorrow's history test.

Fictionary

of
Deviously Delightful Definitions
for
Juvenile Jokesters

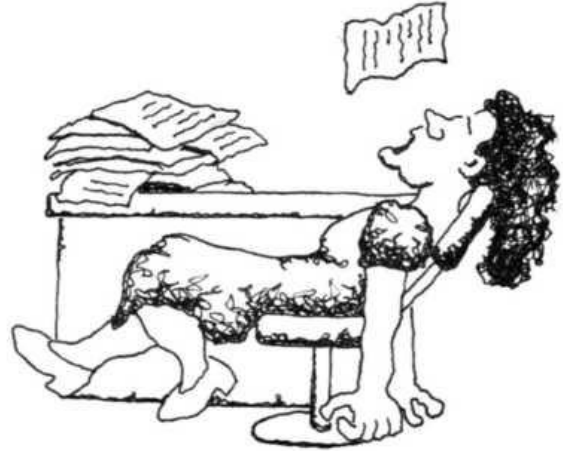
Set 1

Match the collection of words in **bold print** with their *new, improved, more appropriate* definitions or explanations. Write the correct answer in the blank.

Example:

breaker **arrest** **alarm** **afterwards**

arrest Teachers deserve this after a full day at school.



Part 1

ado
alone

climate
diet

flippant
icing

justice
popcorn

steering
treason

- _____ 1. what most people do with a ladder
- _____ 2. a type of bovine jewelry, usually worn on the ear
- _____ 3. a game played by insects of the family Formicidae consisting of a series of intricate moves with the purpose of turning one's opponent upside down
- _____ 4. the opposite of a *don't*
- _____ 5. what you are forced to ask for when you're out of money
- _____ 6. what I do when I'm at chorus practice or when I'm in a really good mood
- _____ 7. the male offspring of a perennial woody plant having a main trunk and usually a distinct crown
- _____ 8. Dad's awful silly jokes
- _____ 9. If you don't like the color of your hair, you can do this.
- _____ 10. you and me only; nobody else