

Sample Pages from

**Seasonal
Brain Teasers and
Vocabulary Builders
for
Young Scholars**

This book is for those students
and their teachers

who *pursue questions* without hesitation,
fully expecting to

encounter challenges,
find new perspectives,
capture answers,

and
experience *Ah-ha!* moments.



Feel free to unleash your enthusiasm!

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We're Back!

Set 1



In the time and space we share with the rest of the world, there are recurring phenomena affecting our lives. From the cycle-driven natural world to our man-made civilizations, things keep **going around** and **coming back**.

One such commonly shared event returns to its point of origin each year usually in August or September. Its progression is signaled by swarms of large yellow vehicles crawling along the roadways carrying thousands of delighted or disgusted young people. Adults congregate at their assigned stations armed with coffee mugs and renewed determination. Anticipation saturates the air.

What is the name given to this strange ritual?

It's **Back to School**, of course!

Use your stored knowledge and deductive reasoning skills to interpret the following clues and name the event, object, or idea that **goes around** and **comes back**. Reference books or the internet will be helpful in some cases. Write your answers in the blanks to the left.

- _____ 1. Once a year, each person can claim a day with special meaning. Sometimes there are celebrations involving presents and cake. What is this day called?
- _____ 2. It circles the Earth, dividing it into the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. No one has ever said where it begins or where it ends. It just keeps going around. What is it?
- _____ 3. These big chunks of space ice put on a spectacular show when their predictable orbits bring them back around to our part of the solar system. The one called Halley's is due to return in 2062. What are they?
- _____ 4. Located in Yellowstone National Park, it blows its top at intervals averaging 91 minutes. What is its name?
- _____ 5. On the same day each year during the first week of July we observe this uniquely American holiday. What day of the month is set aside for the celebration?
- _____ 6. One of the laws of this invisible cosmic force says that *what goes up must come down*. What is it?
- _____ 7. What organ keeps blood circulating through the body?
- _____ 8. Most teachers require it Monday through Thursday but not on Fridays or holidays. What is it?
- _____ 9. What is the name of the trip the Earth makes around the sun each year?
- _____ 10. These special staircases transport people from one level of a building to another by moving in a continuous circle. What are they called?

Body Parts

Set 2

Fill in the blank in each of the following sentences with the name of a human body part.



Example: Once I start a project, I sink my teeth into it

1. Slimy things like eels and slugs make my _____ crawl.
2. The loud thunder sent chills up and down my _____.
3. I worked my fingers to the _____ creating this model airplane.
4. The speaker's controversial remarks raised _____ all over the auditorium.
5. Marlene did most of the _____ work gathering the facts, but I drew the chart that illustrated our findings.
6. My little brother spilled his _____ when Mom asked what happened to the last cookie in the cupboard.
7. I had to do some fancy _____ work to prove I wasn't the guilty party.
8. They fell _____ over _____ in love on their first date.
9. The movie made me cry my _____ out.
10. If they don't stop arguing, somebody's going to eat a _____ sandwich.
11. Frankie is avoiding me because he knows I have a _____ to pick with him.
12. Progress was slow because the girls wasted a lot of time splitting _____ over the exact shade of pink they wanted in the room.
13. Let's get to the _____ of the matter and admit that we made a mistake.
14. Your suggestion hit the nail on the _____. It solved our problem.
15. Juan does not read music. He plays the guitar by _____.
16. Instead of the usual chips and cookies, Mother served _____ sandwiches to her bridge club.

Stuffed Words

Set 1

People stuff *turkeys, suitcases, trash cans, shirts, school desks, drawers, mailboxes, peppers, sausages, teddy bears, zucchinis, closets, pillows, and their faces*. Some **words**, as you may have noticed, stuff themselves with *other words*.

For Example: Identify the following three words stuffed with **key**.

- _____ Benjamin Franklin suggested that it should be our national bird.
 - _____ the central, topmost stone of an arch that locks the other stones together
 - _____ an animal with long limbs and hands and feet adapted for grasping and climbing
- (Answers: **turkey, keystone, monkey**)



Use the following definitions to identify the stuffed words. The common three-letter term hidden in each set of five words is printed in **bold type**. Write your answers in the blanks.

ant

- _____ 1. to breathe rapidly in short gasps
- _____ 2. enjoyable; agreeable
- _____ 3. one of the branched horns of various members of the deer family
- _____ 4. a living organism that grows by photosynthesis
- _____ 5. one who pays rent to occupy or use the property of another

ear

- _____ 6. to feel a strong and deep desire for
- _____ 7. to practice in preparation for a public or official performance
- _____ 8. to look through, inspect, or explore carefully and thoroughly in order to find something
- _____ 9. to vanish
- _____ 10. the fifth largest planet in the solar system

men

- _____ 11. the largest of the body cavities of a mammal; belly
- _____ 12. executed or performed by the mind; intellectual
- _____ 13. to remove the faults or errors in; to change for the better; improve

The Anagram Express

Set 1



How is it possible to begin with strain and end with trains?
 How does hush become rush right before your eyes?
 It's anagram magic!

Put on your thinking cap and take your place as the official conductor of the Anagram Express.

Change each of the following bold print words into another term by rearranging its letters. Use the clues and definitions to help you find the correct anagram and write it in the blank. Answers are connected to the subjects listed before each set.

Reading

- _____ 1. **sloven** long fictional stories typically having a plot that is unfolded by the action, speech, and thoughts of the characters
- _____ 2. **how** Little Cindy-Lou, the Grinch's friend
- _____ 3. **mope** a composition in rhythmic verse, sometimes with rhyming words
- _____ 4. **caudle** He is the Herdman who brought his cat to school for show-and-tell.
- _____ 5. **spore** ordinary speech or writing without verse or rhythmic structure
- _____ 6. **chicle** an overused, trite phrase
- _____ 7. **mires** Ebenezer Scrooge was one of these.
- _____ 8. **gape** a leaf, or one side of a leaf, as in a book, letter, newspaper, or manuscript
- _____ 9. **slow** They deliver mail for Harry Potter and his friends.

Math

- _____ 10. **eon** a single unit, object, or living being
- _____ 11. **scent** Some people will have a few of these left after their holiday spending.
- _____ 12. **sing** + is one, = is one, and \$ is another
- _____ 13. **squeal** has the same value, quantity, or measure as another

In First Place

Set 1



Many people, places, animals, and things have distinguished themselves by being the first, largest, oldest, or fastest of their kind.

Use reference books, the internet, and your own expertise to find answers to the following questions about things that can claim the right to be **in first place**. Choose the correct answer from the three possibilities and write it in the blank.

Example:

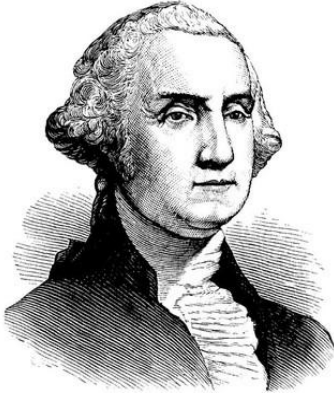
_____ What date is celebrated as the **first** day of the year in the United States as well as in most of the world?
December 25 January 1 March 21

Answer: *January 1*

- _____ 1. The switch from the Julian calendar to the more accurate Gregorian calendar began in 1582. It was many years later, however, when millions of British subjects including American colonists went to bed and compensated for the inaccuracies of the old system by waking up 12 calendar days later. What was the **first** day for the Gregorian calendar in our country?
October 23, 1651 September 2, 1752 January 1, 1764
- _____ 2. Which planet is both the closest to the sun and the **first** in the solar system? *Mars Venus Mercury*
- _____ 3. What is the name of the **first** letter of the Greek alphabet?
Alpha Gamma Omega
- _____ 4. With a population of over 10,000,000, what is currently the world's **largest** city?
Mexico City, Mexico Tokyo, Japan Seoul, South Korea
- _____ 5. It's the **largest** U.S. state.
Alaska Texas Wyoming
- _____ 6. In 1961, he became the **first** person in space and the **first** to orbit Earth.
John Glen Uri Gagarin Leo Tolstoy
- _____ 7. It is the **largest mammal**, possibly the largest animal, to ever inhabit the earth.
megalasaurus the blue whale the giant sloth

Hail to the Chief

Set 3



Use reference books, the internet, and your own memory banks to answer the following trivia questions about the

American Presidency.

To help narrow your search, three possible answers are given. Write the correct one in the blank.



- _____ 1. Which of the following was Abraham Lincoln's favorite song?
The Battle Hymn of the Republic Dixie Amazing Grace
- _____ 2. In 1840 a Shawnee Chief put a curse on William H. Harrison, saying that every man elected in a year ending with a 0 would die in office. Harrison (1840), Lincoln (1860), Garfield (1880), McKinley (1900), Harding (1920), Roosevelt (1940), and Kennedy (1960) all died in office. Who was the Chief?
Chief Sitting Bull Chief Junaluska Chief Tecumseh
- _____ 3. Which president defied the Chief's curse by being elected in a 0 year, surviving an assassin's bullet, and living well past the end of his term in office?
Gerald R. Ford Ronald Reagan James E. Carter
- _____ 4. He was responsible for adding "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance.
Dwight D. Eisenhower John F. Kennedy Lyndon B. Johnson
- _____ 5. Since 1910, every chief executive has chosen to be honorary president of what organization?
Habitat for Humanity NASA the Boy Scouts of America
- _____ 6. This president's wife, known as "Lady Bird," was an environmentalists who led campaigns to beautify America.
John F. Kennedy Lyndon B. Johnson James E. Carter
- _____ 7. Before he was the president, he was once a male model.
John F. Kennedy Woodrow Wilson Gerald R. Ford
- _____ 8. This president, a chronic victim of poor dental health, had only one natural tooth when he was inaugurated. His painful, ill-fitting dentures were **not** made of wood as is commonly believed.
George Washington John Quincy Adams Thomas Jefferson

The End of Ice



In most areas, the arrival of **spring** signals the demise of cold weather and the end of ice. Some **ice**, however, never melts—like the type found in **rice**, **mice**, and **nice**, for example.

The mixed-up words written below in **bold print** end in **i—c—e** when spelled correctly. Not all of them **rhyme** with **ice**, but the last three letters for all of them are **i**, **c**, and **e**.

Use the definitions to help you identify the mixed-up words. Some are quite ordinary, but others will challenge your vocabulary.

Write your answer in the blank.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. ejiscutin | violation of another's rights: lacking that which is right |
| _____ 2. cdiave | opinion about what should or could be done about a situation or problem |
| _____ 3. eioerjic | to feel happiness; to be delighted |
| _____ 4. VcneeI | an Italian city famous for its canals |
| _____ 5. rcepcapii | a very steep cliff; the brink of a dangerous or disastrous situation |
| _____ 6. vedeic | a contrivance or an invention serving a particular purpose, especially a machine used to perform one or more tasks |
| _____ 7. locipe | specialty trained people charged with the responsibility of maintaining order, enforcing the law, and preventing and detecting crime |
| _____ 8. ciciroel | a Mediterranean plant whose root is used as a flavoring, especially in candy and medicines |
| _____ 9. Icsuie | an artificial channel for conducting water, with a valve or gate to regulate the flow |
| _____ 10. ocvei | the sound produced by the vocal organs of a vertebrate, especially a human |
| _____ 11. etbireca | a girl's name, usually spoken as the nickname <i>Bea</i> |
| _____ 12. hoccei | the power, right, or liberty to make a decision; option |
| _____ 13. ewtic | two times |
| _____ 14. etecni | to tempt through often false or exaggerated promises or persuasion; lure |

Scrambled Eggs



Look at the scrambled words written in **bold** print before the definitions. When their letters are rearranged correctly, all the words will begin with the “EGGS” sound. The first two letters of each word are **E** and **X**.

Using the definitions as clues, unscramble the words and write their correct spellings in the blanks. Dictionary assistance is recommended.

Example:

_____ **exti** the act of going out or away; to depart

Answer: *exit*

- _____ 1. **expmael** one that is representative of a whole group; serving as a pattern
- _____ 2. **excanheg** to give in return for something received; trade
- _____ 3. **exoelpd** to burst violently as a result of internal pressure
- _____ 4. **exti** the act of going away or out; a passage or way out; the departure of a performer from the stage.
- _____ 5. **extrat** outside; beyond; more than is needed
- _____ 6. **exuces** to make allowances for; overlook; forgive; to free as from an obligation or duty
- _____ 7. **exlerpo** to make a careful search or examination
- _____ 8. **extyalc** precisely; accurately
- _____ 9. **extidce** having strong feelings; in a state of increased activity or response
- _____ 10. **exmneai** to observe critically or carefully; inspect; to test or check the health of
- _____ 11. **exnvepesi** high in price or charging high prices; costly
- _____ 12. **exgaegtrae** to represent as greater than is actually the case; overstate
- _____ 13. **exlhae** to breathe out; to emit air or vapor

Passing the Test

Tests are not the exclusive property of schools. They are part of life at any age, at any place, at any time. The following questions are about real people who encountered a test and **passed with high marks**. In doing so, each of them contributed something unique to the world.

Use your research skills to find the answers. Write them in the blanks provided.



- _____ 1. In 1805 Toussaint Charbonneau, a French-Canadian fur trapper, was hired by Lewis and Clark to act as interpreter for their expedition to find the Pacific Ocean. Taken along as an unofficial member of the party was his wife Sacajawea, who they thought might be of some value in dealing with native tribes along the way. Early into the journey, she gave birth to a son and carried him the full trek strapped to her back. Diaries from the journey show her to have been a woman of admirable courage and decisive action. Clark praised her as his “pilot.” How old was Sacajawea when she traveled with Lewis and Clark?

16 18 20

- _____ 2. Early in the morning of May 20, 1927, Charles Lindberg, determined to be the first person to fly the Atlantic alone, lifted the “Spirit of St. Louis” from the muddy runway of Roosevelt Field, Long Island. Thirty-three and one-half hours later, he succeeded. Where did he land?

London Berlin Paris

- _____ 3. Thomas Edison is credited with creating the electric utility industry as we know it. On his way to accomplishing this task, he had to invent seven things. Six of them were: *the parallel circuit, a durable light bulb, an improved dynamo, an underground conductor network, devices for maintaining constant voltage, safety fuses and insulating materials*. What was the seventh part of his test?

chords with plugs light sockets with on-off switches copper wire

- _____ 4. Looking for a way to help the south improve its lot through agriculture, George Washington Carver made many scientific discoveries including more than three hundred different products derived from the peanut. What other common food yielded nearly one hundred uses under the force of his determination?

sweet potatoes apples corn

- _____ 5. The ones used in the 1800s in France, Britain, and Germany were made of metal. The invention of an edible version is credited to a New Yorker who received a patent for it in 1903. It attracted public attention in 1904 at the St. Louis World’s Fair when a pastry maker came to the aid of a neighboring vendor short on containers for the frozen treat he was selling. More than fifty other vendors copied the idea. Many took credit for its invention. What is it?

the popsicle the ice cream sundae the ice cream cone

Vacation Relation



Set 1

The following questions are about **words that rhyme with vacation**. Write your answers in the blanks to the left.

Sample:

Write the correct form of the noun **celebration** in the blank and identify its part of speech.

Let's _____ the arrival of the last day of school together. Please come to the playground at 3:00 p.m. on Friday. (Teachers only! Do not leak this information to students. They can organize their own party.)

Answer: celebrate--verb

- _____ 1. Which of the following is a synonym for the word **elation**?
misery joyfulness superbly
- _____ 2. What part of speech is the word **creation** in the following sentence? *The Great Wall of China is an ancient **creation**.*
- _____ 3. Which **two** of the following animals are involved in the process of **pollination**? *bats beetles bees*
- _____ 4. The word that rhymes with **vacation** and means *the periodic passage of groups of animals from one region to another for feeding or breeding* is _____.
- _____ 5. *She said, "I'll call you later."* is an example of a sentence with a direct _____.
- _____ 6. Write the form of **taxation** needed to correctly complete the sentence and name its part of speech.
He _____ our patience.
- _____ 7. What **vacation** rhyme is associated with the following?
WA Mr. a.m. St.
- _____ 8. Write the correct form of **relaxation** in the following sentence and tell what part of speech it is.
The beach was littered with _____ sunbathers.
- _____ 9. Which word is an **antonym** for **aggravation**?
annoyance delight surprise

Keys

We're Back Set 1

1. a birthday
2. the equator
3. comets
4. Old Faithful
5. the fourth
6. gravity
7. the heart
8. homework
9. a revolution
10. escalators
11. a boomerang
12. a presidential election
13. meals
14. day and night
15. sleep
16. the Moon
17. Monarch butterfly
18. seeds
19. 12:00 midnight
20. paint
21. nocturnal
22. the seasons
23. water
24. deciduous
25. oxygen

We're Back Set 2

1. a leap year
2. a lunar eclipse
3. Daylight Saving Time
4. 20 years
5. snowflakes
6. swallows
7. reincarnation
8. TV reruns
9. high tide
10. Rapid Eye Movement
11. earthquakes/volcanic eruptions
12. electricity (electric currents)
13. Venus
14. Pluto
15. General Douglas McArthur
16. hail
17. the Arctic tern
18. the Prime Meridian
19. the International Date Line
20. Groundhog Day
21. blue moon
22. Plate Tectonics
23. the Vernal Equinox/spring
24. hibernation
25. El Niño

Help Wanted Set 1

1. entomologist
2. anesthesiologist
3. parapsychologist
4. neurologist
5. meteorologist
6. carpologist
7. ornithologist
8. cosmetologist
9. microbiologist
10. orologist
11. ichthyologist
12. geologist
13. etymologist
14. rhinologist
15. zoologist
16. graphologist
17. toxicologist
18. ophthalmologist
19. paleontologist
20. seismologist

Help Wanted Set 2

1. farrier
2. herpetologist
3. animator
4. cryptologist
5. astrophysicist
6. bailiff
7. horticulturist
8. cartographer
9. prestidigitator
10. cinematographer
11. arborist
12. oologist
13. speleologist
14. choreographer
15. linguist
16. immunologist
17. forensic scientist
18. gaffer
19. culinary arts
20. pyrotechnist