



Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills 8th Edition

Australasian Version

Maze Progress Monitoring

Grade 8

AU-Year 8 | NZ-Year 9

Administration Directions and Scoring Keys

Examiner script	
I am going to give you a worksheet. When you get your worksheet, please write your name at the top and put your pencil down. (Hand out the Maze student worksheets. Make sure students have written their names down before proceeding.) You are going to read a passage with some words missing from it. For each missing word you will see a box with three words in it. Your job is to circle the word you think makes the most sense in the context of the passage. Let’s look at the Practice Passage together. Listen as I read. Tom goes to a school far from his house. Every morning, he takes a school (pause) art, bus, work (pause) to go to school. Let’s stop there. Let’s circle the word “bus” because I think “bus” makes the most sense here. Listen to how that sentence sounds now. Every morning, he takes a school <u>bus</u> to go to school. Now it’s your turn. Read the next sentence silently to yourself. When you come to a box, read all the words in the box and circle the word that makes the most sense to you. When you are done, put your pencil down. (Allow up to 30 seconds for students to complete the example and put their pencils down.) If necessary, after 30 seconds say Put your pencil down. As soon as all students have their pencils down, say Good job. Now listen. In the (pause) afternoon, library, morning (pause), he also takes a bus home. You should have circled “afternoon” because “afternoon” makes the most sense. Listen. In the <u>afternoon</u>, he also takes a bus home. Okay, when I say “Begin,” turn the page and start reading the passage silently. Start on the page with the title. When you come to a box, read all the words in the box and circle the word that makes the most sense in the passage. You will stop when you come to a stop sign or I say Stop. Ready? Begin. Start the timer. At the end of <u>3 minutes</u>, stop the timer and say Stop. Put your pencils down.	
Reminders	
Start timer	Start the timer after you say Begin .
Prompts	If a student starts reading the passage out loud, say Please read the passage silently. (Repeat as often as needed.) If a student skips an entire page, say. Please be sure not to skip pages. If a student stops working, say Please keep going until I tell you to stop. Just do your best work. (Repeat as often as needed.)
Discontinue	There is no discontinue rule. Every student should be encouraged to try their best until three minutes have passed.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Practice Passage

Tom goes to a school far from his house. Every morning, he takes a school

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Correct: _____

Incorrect: _____

Adjusted Score: _____

The Ukulele

The ukulele is a stringed instrument that looks like a very small guitar. It is certainly

related to the **guitar** since both instruments are members of **the** lute family, but 2

guitars usually have six **strings**, and ukuleles have four or four **sets** of two. The 4

ukulele was developed **in** Hawaii. It was developed from a Portuguese **stringed** 6

instrument, which was brought to the **islands** by immigrants. 7

Ukuleles typically come in four **sizes**: soprano, concert, tenor, and baritone. 8

Each **of** these sizes has a distinct tone. **You** can learn to recognise which one **is** 11

which by listening to ukulele music **until** your ear naturally alerts you to **the** size 13

of the instrument that is **being** played. The smallest size is a **pocket** ukulele, and 15

only forty centimetres long. **The** largest ukulele is seventy-one centimetres long. 16

Keep going



The first ukuleles were built by immigrant cabinet makers in the late 18
 nineteenth century. They were embraced by the Hawaiian people as soon as they 20
 appeared. Their popularity was encouraged by the last king of the islands. The king, 22
 whose nickname was the Merrie Monarch, was a great patron of the arts. Previous 24
 kings had converted to Christianity and suppressed the native arts and culture like 26
 hula, surfing, and ancient chants and songs. But this king worked hard to bring the 28
 native arts back into currency. The king loved to hear ukulele music, and he loved 30
 to play it himself and sing for guests. After he died, his sister became queen and 32
 continued his work. She was a great promoter, singer, and composer of native music. 34
 A famous song was composed by her. 35

Keep going



The ukulele first became popular in the **mainland** of the United States after 37
 a Hawaiian guitar and ukulele **group** was featured at a festival in San Francisco **in** 39
 the early part of the last **century**. Celebrities and songwriters began to play **the** 41
 ukulele. It became a favourite instrument **for** hobby players. People liked the sound, 42
and it was inexpensive, easy to carry, **and** easy to learn. Soon it was **a** staple of 45
 the so-called Jazz Age. **The** sound of the ukulele was suddenly **everywhere**. 47
 But this was only the first **boom** period for the ukulele. With the **close** of the 49
 Jazz Age, the popularity **of** the instrument began to decline. The **sound** had become 51
 associated in people's minds **with** a light and carefree way of **life** and starting 53
 with the Great Depression, **it** was no longer as popular on **the** radio. However, after 55

Keep going



World War II **there** was another ukulele boom maybe because **soldiers** returning by **57**

way of Hawaii often **brought** ukuleles back with them as keepsakes. **Soon** a major **59**

manufacturer began mass producing **plastic** ukuleles, which were so affordable that **60**

anybody could buy one. Ukuleles became widely **used** in schools to teach musical **62**

appreciation. **There** was another slow decline in the **popularity** of the ukulele in **64**

subsequent decades. Thankfully today, however, we are in the middle of the third ukulele

boom since the instrument was first brought to the mainland of the United States.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Practice Passage

Tom goes to a school far from his house. Every morning, he takes a school

art
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work

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library
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Correct: _____

Incorrect: _____

Adjusted Score: _____

The Perseids

If you go outside on a dark night in the middle of the late summer in the Northern

Hemisphere, you might get lucky and see part of the Perseid meteor shower. A meteor is

the flash of **light** we see when a meteoroid, a **piece** of dust or debris left behind **in** 3

the wake of a comet, enters **the** Earth's atmosphere. A meteor is what **we** often call a 5

falling star or **shooting** star. 6

Usually you must stay up **late**, far past your usual bed time, **to** see the most 8

intense Perseid showers, **with** meteors blazing across the sky every **few** seconds. These 10

showers are sometimes called **meteor** storms when the activity becomes frenzied 11

enough: up to one thousand meteors in **a** single hour. Some people like to **take** 14

a blanket from the house and **lie** outside on the lawn to view **these** displays. There 16

Keep going



are even people who **make** themselves a snack in advance or **a** thermos of hot tea or **18**

cocoa **to** enjoy while watching the meteors. **19**

Even **though** the most intense meteor activity usually **occurs** between **21**

midnight and dawn, the Perseid **showers** can be seen in the evening **also**. If you are **23**

watching the sky **in** the evening and happen to **get** very lucky, you might see a **25**

rare but extremely memorable Earth-grazer: a long, **slow**, colourful meteor **27**

travelling horizontally across the **whole** span of evening sky. **28**

The Perseid **meteor** shower occurs every year. At its **peak**, during the second **30**

week in August, **in** the hours just before dawn, as **many** as eighty meteors per hour **32**

may **be** visible. The parent body of the Perseid **meteors** is the comet Swift-Tuttle, **34**

Keep going



discovered by Lewis Swift **and** Horace Parnell Tuttle just three days **apart**. 36

The Swift-Tuttle is the largest known **object** that passes by the Earth repeatedly. 37

It takes over one hundred years to **orbit** the sun. The last time it **was** visible from 40

Earth was before you **were** born. It will appear again over **a** century from now. 42

The Perseid meteor **showers** are called that because they seem **to** originate 44

from the large constellation of Perseus **in** the northern sky. However, the real 45

source of the meteor shower is the **dust** and debris left in the wake **of** the Swift- 48

Tuttle comet. When the Earth **passes** through the comet's wake, some of **this** dust and 50

debris enters the atmosphere **and** ignites. The bright bursts of light **that** streak across 52

the sky, which we **call** shooting stars, are flaming bits of **space** dust. But sometimes 54

Keep going



the meteors are **not** completely burnt up in their rapid **flight** through the atmosphere.

56

If they do actually land on the Earth's surface, then they are called meteorites.



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Correct: _____

Incorrect: _____

Adjusted Score: _____

Opera Singers

When I think of opera singers, I picture highly emotional, big people in elaborate

costumes. I picture them standing in the **middle** of a stage with their arms **slightly** 2
raised from their sides, and their **mouths** shaped like an “O”. I imagine **them** singing 4
long, prolonged words I can’t **understand**, with their voices swooping and swerving 5
and bouncing and wobbling. Why do opera **singers** sing like that? 7
The short answer **is** they sing like that because they **don’t** use microphones 9
and they need to **reach** a whole hall of people, from **the** front to the back, over a 11
full orchestra, without damaging their voices. Also, **an** opera is usually between two 13
and **a** half and three hours long. Between **lessons**, coaching, rehearsals and 15
performances, an opera **singer** spends many hours every day singing. **The** opera style 17

Keep going



of singing helps to **conserve** the voice.

18

The opera singing technique **was** developed in Italy a long time **ago**. It was

20

called by Italian words **that** mean “beautiful singing.” The mouth is **opened** wide to

22

amplify the sound, and **the** mouth, jaw, and throat are relaxed **to** let the song come

24

out without **straining** the vocal chords. The strength to **support** the sound comes

26

from the abdomen, **and** the singer must carefully manage their **breathing** to produce

28

long, intricate phrases. This **kind** of singing is best expressed in **vowel** sounds.

30

English-speaking listeners may not understand **the** words because most operas were

31

written **in** Italian, German, or French. In the **old** days, when you went to the

33

opera you were handed a little book **at** the door that contained the translation

35

Keep going



of the lyrics which would be sung **onstage**. These days, however, you are more **likely** to just read the subtitled translation **projected** above the opera stage – or, if **you** watch the opera on television, the **subtitles** at the bottom of the screen.

Not all opera singers are big, but **some** are. It has become a truism **in** our world to say that opera **singers** are fat. They are not. Some **opera** singers believe that a bigger body **is** better able to support a bigger **sound**. Other people say that opera singers **are** not as big as they look, **but** that years of breath training has **expanded** their rib cages.

Like most other **forms** of art, the more you learn **about** the history and the techniques and **even** the personalities involved in it, the **more** you appreciate the

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39

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Keep going



artwork. Opera originated **during** the Renaissance, in the Italian city **of** Florence, **57**
 where it quickly split into two **main** types: one was formal and dignified **and** was **59**
 usually performed at a royal **court**, while the other was boisterous and **comical**, and **61**
 was performed on outdoor stages **at** festivals. However, it was in the Romantic **era** **63**
 that opera as we know it **came** into being, with rich and emotive **vocal** performances **65**
 and the “beautiful” style of **singing**. Operas are still being written today, but many of **66**
 them are “rock operas”!



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Correct: _____

Incorrect: _____

Adjusted Score: _____

Hurricane

A hurricane is a kind of tropical cyclone. A tropical cyclone is a storm **that** begins 1
over the warm waters of **a** tropical ocean. It features strong winds **and** heavy rains 3
that swirl around a **calm** centre. For a tropical storm to **become** a hurricane, the 5
maximum sustained winds **must** be blowing faster than 119 kilometres **per** hour, 7
which is an indicator of **the** intensity of the storm. 8
Hurricanes are **categorised** by their wind speed and ranked **from** one to five. 10
The lowest category **of** hurricanes has winds that just meet **the** maximum sustained 12
wind requirement. The highest **category** of hurricanes has winds of more **than** 251 14
kilometres per hour. Sometimes the **maximum** sustained winds blow much, much faster 15
than this. Hurricane winds have sometimes been **measured** at over 363 kilometres 17

Keep going



per hour!

Hurricanes are one type of tropical cyclone. **Only** those tropical cyclones 19
that originate in **the** Atlantic basin or in the eastern **or** central North Pacific oceans 21
are called **hurricanes**. Many hurricanes begin and end out **at** sea, never making 23
landfall anywhere. Those **that** do come to land usually die **out** after just a day or 25
two. **But** they can be very destructive while **they** last, causing floods and sometimes 27
sweeping **houses** and boats out into the open **sea**. 29
A hurricane that made landfall in **the** Florida Keys in the middle of **the** last 31
century is still considered among **the** most intense storms in the history **of** the 33
United States. This hurricane had **winds** and pressure so powerful that it **knocked** a 35
train delivering emergency relief **supplies** right off the tracks. It also **temporarily** 37

Keep going



washed out nearly all of the **land** bridges connecting the islands. When the **storm** 39

surges withdrew and the winds quieted **down**, people found fishing boats perched in 40

the tops of trees. 41

Hurricane season begins **in** the late spring and continues into **the** autumn. 43

It peaks in late summer. **Each** year there are usually a handful **of** hurricanes. A few 45

of those are **usually** major hurricanes, requiring people living on **the** coast to make 47

careful storm preparations **or** sometimes to evacuate the area completely. 48

For years, hurricanes have been given names **by** meteorologists and news 50

agencies to talk **about** them and share information. In earlier **times**, hurricanes were 52

named after the places **or** things they hit. But now they **are** given names like people 54

Keep going ►

are. The National Hurricane Center **maintains** lists of names, alternating male and

55

female names in alphabetical order. You can **tell** how many hurricanes there have

57

been **in** a given year by the letter **of** the alphabet of the last hurricane

60

that

year. Sometimes names get recycled, but when a hurricane is especially strong and

destructive, its name is never used again for any other hurricane.



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What is a Victorian?

Have you ever heard someone refer to a house as “a Victorian?” What does “Victorian” mean?

The term “Victorian” **comes** from the name of a former **queen** of England, **2**
Queen Victoria. The expression “Victorian era” **refers** to the period during which she **3**
ruled. Many important changes took place in **the** Victorian era, including profound **5**
changes to **daily** life. In fact, many historians say **that** modern life as we know it **7**
began during the era. **8**
During the Victorian **era**, there was an incredible amount of **technological** **10**
progress. Railroads, steamships, cameras, and sewing **machines** were invented. Electric **11**
lights also became **widespread**. Medicine steadily improved. For the first **time** in **13**

Keep going



history, people could connect instantly **over** long distances through the telegraph, a 14

system for sending messages along a wire. **Imagine** how different life must have 16

been **before** these things! 17

Modernity improved life in **many** ways, but it also created new **challenges**. 19

For example, advances in agriculture and **industry** fueled a population boom in which 20

London **became** the biggest city in the world. **As** cities grew larger and factories 22

became **more** common, there was also an increase **in** poverty, pollution, and crime. 24

Some of **the** earliest police forces were created in **response** to these trends. Many 26

historians have **also** suggested that there was an increase **in** anxiety during this 28

period due to **all** the rapid changes. Victorian era novels, **such** as those featuring 30

Keep going ►

Sherlock Holmes, reflect **anxiety** about science, crime, social class, and England's **31**

global culture. **32**

Housing underwent some important changes **during** the Victorian era, too. To **33**

keep **up** with the growing population, many new **houses** had to be built. Thanks to **35**

new technologies like railroads, these new houses **could** be built out of durable **37**

materials, **like** brick and stone. Many houses built **during** the Victorian era survive **39**

today because **of** increased access to these materials. **40**

So **what** is a Victorian house? A Victorian **era** house refers to any house built **42**

during the Victorian period. The house might **be** a mansion, a medium-sized **44**

house, or **a** series of small houses that are **connected** to one another. In other words, **46**

Keep going



the term “Victorian” describes the house’s age, not its style. That said, Victorian
 houses often had features that older houses did not : lights, hot water, and plumbing.
 They also tended to conform to popular styles of the time, such as the gothic revival
 style , which imitated the appearance of medieval buildings , and the Queen Anne
 style, notable for its large round towers.
 Because Victorian era houses are some of the oldest houses with modern
 features and styles, it is often possible to identify them by sight . Queen Victoria
 had the second longest reign in England’s history. If you see an old but modern house,
 there is a good chance it is a Victorian.



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Adjusted Score: _____

Double Dutch

Double Dutch is a rope skipping game. In Double Dutch, two ropes are **spun** in 1
opposite directions by two rope-spinners, **while** one or more players jumps inside 2
the spaces of the two spinning ropes. **Just** like the game of single jump **rope**, 5
the trick is to use rhythmic, **patterned** movements to avoid getting touched by **the** 7
whirling rope.

It is a very **entertaining** sport to watch, both because of **the** suspense of 9
wondering how long the **player** can last and because the motions **are** so rhythmic 11
and graceful. Sometimes the **ropes** speed up and sometimes they slow **down**. When 13
the ropes are spinning at **their** fastest, they blur so that you **can** hardly see them. 15
No one knows **exactly** how the game originated, but some **think** it might have 17

Keep going



started in ancient **times**, when rope making was a common **and** specialised profession. 19

Rope spinners would tie two **strands** of a plant called hemp to **a** wheel and then 21

walk backward while **twisting** the strands into a single strong **rope**. While the rope 23

spinners worked, boy **runners** would dash back and forth delivering **bundles** of hemp, 25

and they often had **to** jump over or duck under the **twisting** ropes stretched out in 27

their paths. **To** do this effectively required quick feet, **a** good eye, and body strength. 29

The Dutch **were** the first people to make double **rope** jumping into a systematic 31

sport with **definite** rules. They brought the game to **the** United States, which is why 33

it was **named** after them. 34

Double Dutch became very **popular** in urban areas all over the United States. 35

Keep going



Often people sang rhymed verses while spinning **the** ropes and jumping, and the **37**

challenge **of** reciting old or coming up with **new** verses became an important part of **39**

the game. However, after the Second World War **the** popularity of the game began **41**

to **steadily** decline. Some people think the decline **of** the sport was due to the **43**

spread of radios and then television. Others **think** it had something to do with **45**

the fact that there were fewer and **fewer** parks and open spaces in cities **for** **48**

jumping rope in.

But in the **decade** of the 1970s, the sport was **revived** and given a fresh set of **50**

rules for competition. It was adapted from **a** street or schoolyard pastime into a **52**

regular team sport. As the new version **of** the rope jumping sport became more **54**

Keep going



popular with young people, free styles of **jumping** rope emerged onto the scene. 56

The **jumpers** began doing flips, dance moves, and **extra** complex footwork while 58

jumping.

Double Dutch **is** now a recognised varsity sport in **many** public high 60

schools. The National Double Dutch League **has** camps and tournaments every year 61

in **which** teams from nearly every country on **Earth** participate and compete against 63

each other **for** prizes. Maybe someday Double Dutch will be an Olympic game! 64



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Incorrect: _____

Adjusted Score: _____

A Hike to Remember

That breezy tropical morning Moira, Jim, and Silas pedaled their bicycles on the asphalt road up through the mountains to the trailhead at Reef Bay. It was an hour's ordeal

and **people** arrived at their destination exhausted and **sweaty**. 2

Dismounting, they left their bicycles semi-concealed **in** the dense bushes by 3

the road, **and** Moira fastened the straps of her **knapsack** that contained their three 5

bottles of **water**, three sandwiches, a sketchbook, and a **box** of artist pencils. 7

Moira sang in **disconnected** phrases to herself as she strode **ahead** in her 9

hiking boots and shorts, **bare** legs flashing in the sunrays that **blazed** down 11

through the thick, leafy green **forest** canopy. Jim followed her in and **out** of the 13

chilling shadows, stepping carefully **over** twisted roots and boulders. Behind Jim 14

Keep going



wobbled Silas, who had shorter legs and at moments had to break into a jog 17
 to keep up with his older siblings. 18
 The rock-strewn trail descended in switchback turns through a virgin rainforest 19
 deep with shadows and ringing with startling bird songs, and the humidity of the 21
 stagnant air made the three children sweat even harder. 22
 They heard the ringing and clattering of the waterfall from far off. When 24
 they stepped into the narrow clearing from the depths of the forest, they all stood 26
 immobile for a moment, gazing at a secluded pool surrounded by bare, smooth 28
 rocks. Water thundered down from high above and trickled in many different 30
 small streams into the pool. 31

Keep going



“Beautiful,” Moira said. “Yes, magical,” Jim **replied** .

32

Jim stepped down into the pool **and** waded, up to his knees in **water** , across

34

to the petroglyphs. The intricate **stone** carvings were just a few feet **above** the

36

water’s surface. One could only **see** them dimly in the filtered, emerald-green **jungle**

38

light.

Jim scooped dark water in **both** hands and poured it over the **rock** to make

40

the petroglyphs stand out **more** clearly. Some of the carvings looked **like** animals,

42

others like human faces – while **others** seemed to be mere abstract geometric **zigzags**

43

, spirals, and other patterns.

44

Moira took **her** sketchbook and pencil box out of **the** knapsack and Silas

46

Keep going



watched as she **made** rapid pencil drawings. 47

“They’re at least three thousand **years** old,” Silas said in a murmuring 48

undertone . “Do you know that?” 49

Silas had **read** about these carvings in his colour-illustrated **school** 51

textbooks, but it made him oddly **lightheaded** to stand here and see them **exactly** 53

where they had been made three thousand **years** ago. 54

Then Jim looked straight up **and** said, “Wow.” Silas and Moira craned **their** 56

necks to gaze upward also.

Thousands **of** white butterflies were whirling in the **air** over the dark pool. 58

At the **top** of the roaring falls, Silas saw **even** more darting butterflies, with quick 60

Keep going 

flashes **of** yellow and orange fluttering amid the **cloud** of white. 62

Silas suddenly asked, “What’s **the** lifespan of a butterfly?” Moira shut **her** 64

sketchbook, clicked her tongue on the **roof** of her mouth and replied, “Oh. **These** ? 66

Just a few days, I think.”

Silas shivered, thinking about these prehistoric petroglyphs deep down below and
the beautiful, transitory butterflies fluttering in the clear sunlight high above.



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Adjusted Score: _____

Swimming in the Ancient World

Human beings have been swimming for a long time. In a cave in the Sahara

Desert, **in** Egypt, there are rock paintings that **may** be 10,000 years old that **2**
appear **to** show people swimming. It might seem **strange** to think of swimming in **4**
a **very** dry and sandy desert—and some **scholars** do not believe that the figures **6**
in the painting are actually swimming—but **at** the time the paintings were made, **8**
the climate was different, and the Sahara **was** wet and green. **10**
Wall carvings excavated **from** the ruins of a palace in **what** is now Iraq, **12**
that date to **the** 860s BC, show Assyrian soldiers swimming **across** a river. Some **14**
swim freely, and **others** use inflated animal skins as flotation **aids**. **16**
The world's oldest swimming pool, known **as** the “Great Bath,” was constructed **17**

Keep going



in **what** is now Pakistan in the 3rd millennium BC. **It** was made of bricks that **19**

were **sealed** water-tight with tar, and there are **steps** leading into it at either end. **21**

It is about seven metres wide, twelve **metres** long, and two metres deep. Scholars **23**

believe the pool was used for rituals **or** religious ceremonies. **25**

The ancient Greeks were **good** swimmers. Theirs was a maritime culture **26**

that used boats for fishing, trade, and **war**, so children were taught to swim **by** **29**

their parents when they were very **young** Plato, the great Greek philosopher, said **30**

that an educated person should know how **to** read, write, and swim. Young men **32**

were trained for adulthood and military service **in** gymnasiums; like our modern **34**

gyms, the **gymnasiums** were places for athletics and exercise, **including** **36**

Keep going



swimming, but the young men who **attended** them also studied academic subjects. 37

Young **women** did not go to the gymnasiums; **they** were trained in domestic skills 39

and **married** at a young age. But, there **is** one famous swimmer who was a 41

woman : Hydna of Scione. In 480 BC, **when** the Greeks were engaged in a **sea** 44

battle with the Persians, Hydna and **her** father swam sixteen kilometres out into 45

the sea during a storm and dove **under** the Persian ships. Together, they cut **the** 48

ropes holding the ships in place, **causing** them to drift away and crash **into** each 50

other.

Like the Greeks, the **ancient** Romans loved water. They built public 51

bathhouses that had hot pools and cold **pools** for getting clean and relaxing in, 53

Keep going 

and swimming pools for exercise. Watery spectacles were arranged for the 55
 emperors in lakes or flooded amphitheatres; sometimes naval battles were 56
 re-enacted, and sometimes women, acting as water nymphs, put on displays of 58
 synchronised swimming. The world's first heated swimming pool was built by 60
 Gaius Maecenas, a wealthy Roman politician and patron of the arts. The pool was 62
 heated by wood fires that burned in a basement underneath it. It was surrounded by 63
 luxurious gardens that included statues, libraries, an aviary, and a place to ride horses.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Practice Passage

Tom goes to a school far from his house. Every morning, he takes a school

art
bus
work

 to go to school. In the

afternoon
library
morning

, he also takes a bus home.



Correct: _____

Incorrect: _____

Adjusted Score: _____

Deep Sea Treasure

More than a century after the Titanic hit an iceberg and sank into the depths of the North Atlantic Ocean, the remains of the ship were hit again, this time by a small submarine.

The small, two-person sub was filming **a** documentary when intense currents **1**
overwhelmed the **vehicle**. No one onboard was harmed and **the** only damage to **3**
the sub was **a** rust stain on one side. It's **unclear** if the wreck of the Titanic **5**
sustained any damage. **6**

The collision was revealed **in** court documents filed during a legal **battle**. **8**

The case involves a company eager **to** “cut open the hull and extract **artefacts**” **10**
from the sunken ship. They are **seeking** legal permission to do so. **11**

Though **many** items have previously been recovered from **the** shipwreck area, **13**

Keep going



no one has ever **been** permitted to seize anything from inside **the** ship. 15

One of the items the **company** hopes to retrieve is a wireless telegraph **from** 17

a soundproof room. This is the **same** telegraph that was used to transmit **distress** 19

calls shortly before the ship sank. **In** 1912, the device was considered state-of-the-art 20

technology. 21

Among the last messages sent out **were** these: 22

“We are putting passengers off **in** small boats. Women and children in **boats**. 24

Cannot last much longer. Losing power.”

The final message was: “Come quick. Engine **room** nearly full.” 26

The last time that **divers** got a close look at the **wreck** of the Titanic, the ship 28

Keep going 

didn't **look** to be in very good shape. **Some** experts predict that the wreckage might **30**
only have another 30 years before the **interior** structure collapses upon itself. **32**
 Scientists blame **a** newly discovered form of bacteria, which **is** eating away at the **34**
 rusted iron, **gradually** breaking it down. Eventually, all the **metal** will disintegrate **36**
 entirely. One scientist said **that** it is fascinating how the Titanic **is** being consumed **38**
 by the ocean while **providing** shelter for a remarkably diverse number **of** sea **40**

creatures.

The Titanic is one **of** the most famous ships in history, **recognised** at the **42**
 time for its fancy **design** and solid construction. Capable of holding 2,400 **43**
passengers and roughly 900 crew members, the **monstrous** ship weighed over **45**

Keep going 

42,000-tonnes. It measured 269 **metres** long, the length of four city **blocks**. Onboard 47

was a swimming pool, a **gym**, numerous elegant cafes, and several plush **dining** 49

rooms.

Apparently, the Titanic fell to **the** seabed in two pieces and now **rests** at 51

the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. **When** it went down, just four days **into** its 53

maiden voyage, several millionaires were **among** the passengers. So, there is speculation 54

that many other treasures, such as gold **and** diamond jewellery, might be recovered. 56

One **the** millionaires who went down with **the** Titanic was Benjamin 58

Guggenheim. He drowned **along** with his chauffeur, René Pernot, and **his** valet, 60

Victor Giglio. Guggenheim's French mistress **and** her maid were also aboard, but 61

Keep going



Guggenheim **made** sure they got onto a lifeboat **together**. He and his valet then **63**

returned **to** their stateroom to get dressed. After pinning a rose in his buttonhole, **64**

Guggenheim is reported to have said, "We've dressed up in our best and are prepared to go down like gentlemen."



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Backyard Foxes

One Sunday in April, the Phan family woke to discover that a family of foxes had

taken up residence in their backyard. Mr. Phan, who was the first **to** spot the animals,

counted two adults **and** four kits, which is what baby **foxes** are called. He told his

wife **over** breakfast that from the look of **it** adults, they appeared to be a **family**

of red foxes, a variety fairly **common** to the area.

As Mrs. Phan **poured** another cup of coffee, she confessed **to** seeing a long,

furry animal with **short** legs and a bushy tail sniffing **around** the far edge of the

property **several** weeks earlier, sometime around early March. “ **I** thought it was

just some neighbour’s **dog** that had gotten loose, but I **bet** that was the mother fox

searching **for** a suitable place to make a **den**,” she said.

Keep going



Her husband agreed that **the** animal she'd described was probably a **fox**, 19

though he questioned if it was **the** vixen, which is what a female **fox** is called. He 21

pointed out that **red** foxes are typically monogamous creatures and **that** a pair will 23

usually mate for **life**. When the time came to start **a** family both the male and the 25

female worked together to build a burrow **and** raise the young. 27

Mrs. Phan sipped **her** coffee and studied her husband's face **as** he spread 29

strawberry jam on a **slice** of toast. "Exactly when did you **become** such a wildlife 31

expert?" she teased.

Mr. Phan **shrugged** his shoulders and grinned because he **suspected** that his 33

wife, a retired school **teacher**, was merely teasing him about his **enthusiastic** 35

Keep going



reading habits. He had been an **avid** reader throughout his life and someone **who** 37

loved learning. Since settling into retirement, **his** appetite for knowledge had 38

increased to **the** degree that now he could easily **digest** two or three books a week. 40

Lately, he read about urban wildlife and **the** consequences of humans inhabiting 42

homes bordering **rural** environments. 43

A family of foxes wasn't **a** threat. The Phans' children were all **grownups**, 45

living elsewhere. The couple also didn't **have** any pets that might interact with **the** 47

foxes, which can become aggressive when **cornered**. 48

Overall, red foxes were rather shy **animals** that preferred to hunt mostly at 49

night and didn't waste time rummaging around **in** garbage cans like raccoons. 51

Keep going ►

They were **omnivores** who could make a meal out **of** just about anything from **53**

crickets and **caterpillars** to mice and birds. They'd eat **snakes**, frogs, birds, **55**

berries, and just about **any** insect, even earthworms. **56**

The fact that **the** kits were now old enough to **leave** the den for rough and **58**

tumble **play** sessions meant they had already been **weaned** from their mother's milk. **60**

They would **soon** be allowed to hunt alongside their **parents**, who would teach **62**

them how to **dig** burrows where they could hide surplus **food** for later. **64**

Mr. Phan got up **from** the table and pressed his face **to** the window. **66**

"Honey," he said, squinting **into** the sunlight. "Do you know where **I** left my **68**

binoculars?"

"I'll get them for you, dear," his wife said.

