

# Brass Instruments

Here comes the parade. We hear the brass instruments playing. Their music brings bright sounds to the parade.

We see the trombones first. They look great in the front rows of the parade. They are long. They make low sounds.

Then we hear the trumpets. They are loud brass instruments. Trumpets are short. They make high sounds.

Trombones and trumpets are brass instruments. There is a trick to playing them. You must make a sound with your lips first. Try to make the sound. Press your lips together tightly. Pretend to hold a toothpick between them. Then blow out your breath. You will hear a sound. All music from brass instruments starts with this sound.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Brass instruments make \_\_\_\_\_ sounds.  
bright, bring, trick

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Trumpets are loud \_\_\_\_\_ instruments.  
brass, front, press

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

There is a \_\_\_\_\_ to playing brass instruments.  
press, trick, try

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

You must \_\_\_\_\_ your lips together to make the sound.

great, press, trick

5. How are trombones and trumpets different?

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## Word List

press	bright	trick
prep	bride	truck
prop	breed	track
prom	greed	crack
from	grade	cram
front	grate	crab
frog	grape	crib

# Elk

Elk are very large. They can weigh up to 1,000 pounds. Yet they weigh only 30 pounds when they are born.

Young elk drink their mothers' milk. Later they eat grass. Elk like to lick salt.

Elk are brown. Their coats are thick when it is cold. They molt when the weather turns mild. Molt means their coats thin.



Male elk grow antlers. The antlers tilt back. They hang over the elk's back. Antlers fall off at the end of winter. Elk grow new ones each spring. Old elk grow the biggest antlers. Adult elk can have 12 points on their antlers.

Wild elk can live to be ten years old. Wolves hunt elk. People hunt elk too.

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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Young elk drink \_\_\_\_\_ from their mothers.

cold, milk, molt

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

When elk \_\_\_\_\_, their coats get thin.

molt, tilt, wild

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Elk have a thick coat when the weather is \_\_\_\_\_.

cold, mild, old

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Elk antlers \_\_\_\_\_ back.

molt, old, tilt

5. What does an elk look like in the summer?

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## Word List

milk

tilt

old

bilk

silt

sold

silk

wilt

fold

sulk

welt

hold

hulk

belt

mold

bulk

felt

mild

elk

welt

wild

# Louis Braille

When Louis Braille was a boy, he poked himself in the eye with something sharp. He cried and screamed. He was very frightened. People tried to help him, but Louis lost his sight. He was trapped in darkness.

Louis was very bright. He went to a school for the blind and got good grades there. Louis learned to read by touching raised letters on a page. But reading this way was slow. His dream was to read easily.

Then Louis did something great. He created a way to read by touching dots pressed into paper. This way of reading was easier and faster. We call these dots braille, after Louis Braille. Libraries of braille books began to grow. Today many blind people read braille.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Louis Braille's \_\_\_\_\_ was to read easily.

dream, grade, great

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Braille is dots \_\_\_\_\_ into paper.

cried, pressed, trapped

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Many blind people read \_\_\_\_\_.

braille, dream, tried

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

When Louis lost his sight, he was \_\_\_\_\_ in darkness.

cried, grow, trapped

5. What did Louis Braille do that was great?

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## Word List

cried	dream	grow
cream	drove	groan
creep	drone	green
creed	prone	gray
breed	prune	tray
braid	prude	true
Braille	pride	tree

# Snake Skin

A snake slides over the bumpy ground. The snake has bright spots and stripes. The snake has thin skin. This skin has scales. But the same skin doesn't stay with the snake forever. As the snake grows, the skin becomes too small. The snake must shed its skin.

When the snake starts shedding, its eyes look white. Its spots and stripes become hard to see. After many days, the snake starts scratching its head. It scratches its head against a stone or a stick. The skin on its head splits open. The snake stretches. It slowly slides out of its old skin. The snake slides away. Its spots and stripes are bright once again.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A snake sheds its \_\_\_\_\_.

skin, stone, stripes

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A snake has thin skin with \_\_\_\_\_.

scales, scratches, stretches

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The snake \_\_\_\_\_ out of its old skin.

scales, slides, slowly

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A snake \_\_\_\_\_ its head on a stick or a stone.

scratches, slides, stretches

5. Why does a snake shed its skin?

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## Word List

scale	split	stretch
scare	splat	streak
skate	splash	stream
skeet	stripes	scream
sky	smash	stone
sly	smack	store
slide	snack	stoke

# Snowstorms and Blizzards

Clouds stretch across the sky. They look like a gray blanket. Snow starts to fall. The snow can fall in many different ways.

Snow flurries are lightly falling snow. Snowflakes float slowly from the sky. The snow does not pile up.

Snow squalls are snowstorms. The wind blows. Snow piles up. Snow squalls last a short time.

Blizzards are dangerous snowstorms. Strong winds blow snow into big piles. They block roads. Sometimes the roads close. Strong winds blow very cold air everywhere. Power lines blow down. Blizzards last many hours. People may get stranded for days.

People should plan for a blizzard. They must wear warm clothes. They stay home if they can.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Sometimes snowflakes \_\_\_\_\_ slowly from the sky.

close, flake, float

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Strong winds \_\_\_\_\_ power lines down.

block, blow, float

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

We sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ roads in a blizzard.

blow, close, float

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Big piles of snow can \_\_\_\_\_ roads.

block, blow, flake

5. How are snow squalls different from snow flurries?

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### Word List

flake	close	block
fluke	clove	black
flute	cloze	blab
float	clone	blob
fleet	clean	blot
flee	cleat	bless
flue	cleave	bliss

# Stringed Instruments

Stretch a strong string very tightly. Then snap it. The string will move very fast. It will make a sound.

Now stretch the string across an empty box. Snap the string again. The sound will be louder. The box makes the sound louder.

Add more strings. You have made a stringed instrument.

Start to play your instrument. You can play it by snapping the strings. You can play it by scratching the strings with a stick. You can strum the strings with your fingers. You can also strike them with your hand. Snapping the strings makes a different sound than strumming them.

Now spread your hand across the strings. The strings will stop moving. The sound will stop too.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Stretch a \_\_\_\_\_ across an empty box.

snap, stick, string

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

You can \_\_\_\_\_ the strings with your hand.

stick, strike, strong

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

When the \_\_\_\_\_ stop moving, the sound stops too.

scratch, snap, strings

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A string will make a sound when you \_\_\_\_\_ it.

snap, spread, stop

5. Write three things you can do to strings to make sounds.

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## Word List

snap	strum	scratch
snag	strut	scrap
snack	strung	scram
snatch	strong	scrub
snitch	string	sprung
stitch	sting	spring
stick	stink	sprang

# The Blimp

What is floating in the blue sky? It is not a plane flying by. It's too slow. It is not a cloud floating past. It's too close. What is floating in the blue sky? It's a blimp.

A blimp is an airship. It is a large air bag. It is made of cloth. It is filled with gas. The gas is lighter than air. This gas helps the blimp float.

A pilot steers a blimp. To steer, the pilot climbs into a place under the air bag. Blimps were used in World War I. People flew them to see if the enemy was close.

Today blimps fly over ball games. People take pictures of the games from the blimp.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Blimps \_\_\_\_\_ in the sky.

close, float, plane

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A \_\_\_\_\_ is filled with gas.

blimp, blue, slow

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The pilot climbs into a place under the blimp to \_\_\_\_\_.

cloud, fly, plane

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Blimps are large air bags made of \_\_\_\_\_.

blue, cloth, planes

5. What makes blimps float?

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## Word List

cloth	blue	fly
clock	bloat	flee
clod	bleat	fleet
clop	bleak	float
plop	bleed	floe
plot	blade	flue
plod	blame	flute

# The Skunk

What animal makes a big stink? Did you think of a skunk? You are not wrong.

A skunk makes a stink when it is scared. First it pounds its feet on the ground. Then it lifts its long tail. It sends musk out of its glands. The musk smells very bad. You can smell it a mile away. The smell can last for days.

The spotted skunk stands on its front feet. It lifts its hind end off the ground. It shoots the musk over its back. This skunk can send the musk 12 feet away. Wind can carry the smell farther yet.

Here is a hint for you. Do not stand downwind from a skunk.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A skunk makes a \_\_\_\_\_ when it is scared.

gland, hint, stink

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The spotted skunk can \_\_\_\_\_ its musk 12 feet.

end, front, send

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Do not \_\_\_\_\_ downwind from a skunk.

hint, stand, think

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The skunk lifts its hind \_\_\_\_\_ to shoot musk.

end, front, stink

5. What does a skunk do before it lifts its tail to shoot musk?

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## Word List

stink	front	end
sink	runt	bend
think	hunt	lend
chink	hint	send
chunk	lint	sand
hunk	mint	stand
skunk	tint	strand

# The Spitting Spider

Not all spiders spin webs to catch insects. Some spiders hunt for their food.

The spitting spider hunts for food. It does not look like a hunter. It is small. It has skinny legs. Its legs are not strong. It moves slowly. So the spitting spider needs a special way to hunt.

The spitting spider hides. It waits for an insect. It stays very still. Then an insect steps near. The spider spits something sticky. The insect gets trapped in the sticky stuff. The spider walks slowly to the insect. It bites the insect's legs. Then this strange spider eats the insect.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A spitting spider stays \_\_\_\_\_ while waiting for an insect.

stick, still, stuff

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The spitting spider moves \_\_\_\_\_.

skinny, slowly, sticky

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The spitting spider \_\_\_\_\_ sticky stuff to trap the insect.

spins, spits, stays

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Some spiders \_\_\_\_\_ webs to catch insects.

spin, spit, step

5. Why does the spitting spider need a special way to hunt?

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## Word List

spin	slow	stick
spit	slope	still
spill	scope	stiff
skill	scone	staff
skin	score	stuff
skit	scare	stun
skip	scale	stub

# The Wasp

A wasp is not the best guest at a picnic. A wasp is a real pest. It might rest on your food. It might taste your ice cream. It might even sting you.

A wasp looks like a bee. But it is not a bee. A bee is hairy. It has a round shape. A wasp is not hairy. It has a thin waist.

Most wasps build nests. Building a nest is a big task. Just watch a paper wasp. It makes its nest from paper. But the wasp must make the paper first. It makes the paper from wood. Did you know that paper wasps made paper from wood before people did?



*Photo by Joaquim Alves Gaspar*

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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A wasp is a \_\_\_\_\_ at a picnic.

pest, taste, waist

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A \_\_\_\_\_ looks like a bee.

best, nest, wasp

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

It is a big \_\_\_\_\_ to build a nest.

just, rest, task

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Wasps make their \_\_\_\_\_ from paper.

nests, pests, tasks

5. How are wasps and bees different?

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## Word List

nest	task	wasp
pest	ask	wisp
vest	bask	lisp
best	mask	rasp
rest	musk	asp
chest	dusk	gasp
guest	tusk	hasp

# Trolleys

Ding, ding, ding! The trolley driver rings the bell. The trolley travels down the street. The driver puts on the brake. The driver drops some people off and picks some people up. The driver rings the bell again.

A trolley is sometimes called a streetcar. It looks like a train with one car. It moves on tracks on the ground. A trolley has many windows. It has a bright light on the front.

A trolley draws its power from wires. The wires stretch high over the tracks. A pole brings the power to the trolley.

Years ago people rode trolleys. It was a great way to travel through city streets.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The \_\_\_\_\_ stops the trolley.

brake, drop, ground

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A trolley has a \_\_\_\_\_ light on the front.

bright, drop, track

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

A trolley looks like a \_\_\_\_\_.

front, track, train

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Trolleys move on \_\_\_\_\_ over the ground.

brakes, tracks, trains

5. How are trolleys like trains?

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## Word List

train	brake	front
trait	brain	from
trail	braid	frog
grail	bride	drop
grain	bright	drip
green	fright	drill
greed	fruit	drib

# What Is a Glacier?

Flakes of snow fall to the ground. The fluffy snow grows into big piles of snow. The snow packs down. It turns into slippery ice. More snow falls. Some of the snow turns into slippery ice too. The ice and snow get deep and heavy. Some ice starts to slide over the rest of the ice. This moving ice and snow is a glacier. The glacier flows slowly down mountain slopes. It slides slowly over flat land. It flows so slowly you cannot see it move. It flows into the sea. Pieces of the glacier break off. They float in the sea. These pieces are very large. They are called icebergs.



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## Quiz Questions

1. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ of snow grow into big piles.

flakes, float, slides

2. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

The glacier flows down the mountain \_\_\_\_\_.

flakes, flat, slopes

3. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Pieces of the glacier break off and \_\_\_\_\_ into the sea.

flat, slide, slowly

4. Fill in the blanks with words from the list below.

Icebergs \_\_\_\_\_ in the sea.

flat, float, fluff

5. What are glaciers?

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## Word List

float	slide	glide
fleet	slime	glade
flute	slope	glaze
fluke	sleep	glare
flume	sleet	gleam
flame	sleek	glee
flake	sleeve	glue