

A Terrible Oil Spill

On the night of March 23, 1989, the Exxon Valdez had just started its voyage. It was full of oil. The captain joined the third mate at the wheel. He saw some ice in the water. To avoid the ice, he pointed the ship toward some rocks. He told his mate to turn the ship back toward its lane. Then the captain went to his room.

Leaving turned out to be a bad choice. The mate did not turn the ship in time. The captain heard a loud noise. The ship had hit the rocks. Oil spilled into the sea.



The oil poisoned birds. It destroyed many animals. It spoiled miles of shoreline.

People worked to clean up the oil. But the spill was large and hard to reach. They toiled for years. Now people and animals can enjoy the shoreline again.

Quiz Questions

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

Years ago, the Exxon Valdez had an accident. The accident happened early in the ship's ______. The ship was trying to _____ some ice.
avoid, join, oil, voyage

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

The captain made a bad _____ because he went to his room. Then he heard a loud _____.
choice, join, noise, toil

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

The huge _____ spill poisoned many animals and _____ many miles of shoreline.

enjoyed, oil, pointed, spoiled

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

People _____ for years to clean up the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Today, people and animals can _____ the shoreline.

enjoy, join, spoiled, toiled

5. Write a sentence telling why it took years to clean up the oil spill.

Word List

oil	noise	voyage
toil	poise	employ
soil	point	enjoy
spoil	joint	destroy
boil	joins	Troy
roil	join	Roy
broil	coin	coy

Bamboo

Did you know that bamboo is one of the fastest-growing plants? It's true. Some kinds of bamboo can grow over a foot each day!

Bamboo has long roots. These roots keep sending up new shoots. Once bamboo is planted, it doesn't need to be planted again.

Bamboo has a woody stem. Like tree wood, bamboo has many uses. It can be used to make paper. It can be used to build furniture and shelters, too.

Forests of trees are often cut down for their wood. They may take many decades to grow back. But bamboo forests can grow back much faster. They may grow back in just a few years.

The Chinese have been using bamboo for thousands of years. Now people are looking for more ways to use bamboo. Using bamboo can help protect our trees.



Photo by Alaexis

Quiz Questions

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

Some kinds of bamboo can _____ over a foot each day. Bamboo roots keep

sending up _____ shoots.

down, grow, know, new

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

Bamboo has a _____ stem and long _____.

few, foot, roots, woody

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

People cut bamboo plants _____ for their wood. Bamboo forests may grow back in just a _____ years.

down, few, know, new

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

Once _____ is planted, it doesn't need to be planted again. Now people are _____ for more ways to use bamboo.

bamboo, growing, looking, wood

5. Write a sentence that tells how using bamboo can help protect our trees.

Word List

grow	shoot	wood
grown	boot	good
row	booth	stood
throw	tooth	shook
knows	knew	hook
known	flew	took
own	grew	book

Cowboy Hats

John Stetson was not a spoiled boy. He worked for his dad. He boiled fur and made it into hats. As he toiled, he dreamed of moving west.

In 1859, John finally moved west. He joined some gold diggers. The sun was hot. John's hat did not protect him from the sun, so he made a better hat. It was tall with a big brim. People pointed and laughed at his hat. But it protected him from the weather, and when it got soiled, John just brushed it off. One day, a cowboy gave John a five-dollar coin for his hat. That was a lot of money.



John did not find gold, so he went home. He made hats again, but this time he made tall hats with big brims. Today many people enjoy wearing Stetson hats.

Quiz Questions

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

When John Stetson was a _____, he made hats for his dad. He
_____ fur to make the hats.

boiled, boy, cowboy, joined

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

As he _____, John Stetson dreamed of moving west. In 1859, he
_____ gold diggers in the west.

enjoyed, joined, pointed, toiled

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

People _____ at John Stetson's hat. They thought it was funny. When the hat got _____, John just brushed it off.

boiled, pointed, soiled, spoiled

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

One _____ liked John's hat and gave him a five-dollar coin for it. John made more hats. Many people still _____ Stetson hats.

boil, cowboy, enjoy, spoiled

5. Write a sentence telling what John Stetson's hats looked like.

Word List

boy	enjoy	toiled
joy	employ	coiled
coy	convoy	foiled
Roy	cowboy	boiled
soy	batboy	broiled
toy	soymilk	soiled
Troy	joystick	spoiled

Did I Spell It Wrong?

The words gnat, wrap, knock, gnome, and knee are alike. Do you know how?

Long ago some words were not said the way they are said now. When people said knee, they did not say it the way we do. They made the K sound.

Over time people changed the way they said some words. Sometimes the first sound was dropped. So when people said knee, they no longer made the K sound. But they still wrote the word knee with the letter K.

The printing press was invented. People started using dictionaries. The old way of writing words became too hard to change. Gnome, wrist, gnat, wrap, and knock are some of these old words. They look wrong, but they are not. They are just words we write in old ways.

Because these words are not spelled the way they sound, we have to learn them well. That way we will not spell them wrong.



Quiz Questions

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

Some words look _____ even when we spell them right. We
_____ them the way people said them long ago.

know, wrapped, write, wrong

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

Long ago when people said the word _____, they made the K sound at the beginning. So they _____ the letter K at the beginning of the word.
knee, wrapped, wrong, wrote

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

Today when we say a word like _____, we do not say the G sound. But we still _____ the word with the letter G.

gnat, knock, write, wrong

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

The word _____ starts with W, but it sounds like it starts with R. If we do not _____ how to spell these words, we get them wrong.

gnome, knee, know, wrap

5. Write a sentence that tells why words starting with silent letters seem wrong but are not.

Word List

write	gnat	knock
wrote	gnash	knick
wrong	gnaw	knit
wring	gnarr	knot
wrist	gnarl	know
wrap	gnu	knew
wrack	gnome	knee

Ground Zero

It was September 11, 2001. It was a bright day. There were no clouds. People had just started work. Many people worked in the twin towers of the World Trade Center. They were the tallest towers in New York.

All of a sudden, a jet flew into the south tower. There were loud sounds. Glass rained down. Dust showered the streets. Then a second jet flew into the north tower. The United States was under attack. The Twin Towers were ground zero.

People tried to get out of the towers. Some ran down the steps. Others jumped out of windows. Some brave people came to help.

Then the towers fell. Almost three thousand people died.

Later, people went to Ground Zero. Some brought flowers. They thought about those who died. They were proud of those who tried to help.



Quiz Questions

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

On September 11, 2001, almost three _____ people were killed in New York.

Many of them were working in the World Trade Center _____.

ground, loud, thousand, towers

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

A jet flew into the _____ tower of the World Trade Center. People heard _____ sounds.

ground, loud, south, thousand

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

A jet flew into the north tower. Some people jumped _____ windows. Others ran _____ the steps.

about, down, ground, out

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

Eventually, the twin towers fell to the _____. People brought flowers to Ground Zero and thought _____ those who were killed.

about, ground, out, south

5. Write a sentence telling some things that happened because the jets flew into the twin towers.

Word List

loud	ground	towers
proud	round	showers
cloud	hound	flowers
clout	pound	clowns
lout	sound	crown
bout	south	town
out	mouth	down

Jesse Owens

Jesse Owens was born in a farming town. His family picked cotton and plowed the fields. They did not own much. His house looked like wood just thrown together. Cold wind would blow right through it. But there was something special about Jesse. Someday the whole world would know his name. How did Jesse grow from a poor boy into a star?

It started when a coach at school saw Jesse run. The coach asked Jesse to join the track team. Jesse had a lot of willpower. He showed up for practice every day. He followed his coach's directions. Soon he could zoom down the track.

Hard work paid off for Jesse. In 1936, he ran in the Olympics in Germany. The crowd watched Jesse win four events in one Olympics. Four times, the American flag slowly rose after he was crowned winner. Jesse made history.



Quiz Questions

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

Jesse Owens lived in a farming _____. Jesse's family used to

_____ fields and pick cotton.

follow, plow, show, town

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

Growing up, Jesse Owens did not _____ very many things. But Jesse had lots of _____.

crowns, own, soon, willpower

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

Jesse joined the track team and _____ up for practice every day. He _____ his coach's directions. His hard work paid off.
followed, looked, owned, showed

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

Jesse Owens made history at the 1936 Olympics. As he was _____ winner, the American flag rose _____. Jesse had just won a fourth Olympic event!
crowned, slowly, soon, town

5. Write a sentence that tells how Jesse Owens showed he had a lot of willpower.

Word List

zoom	looked	grow
loom	booked	throw
loon	hooked	blow
soon	hook	slow
spoon	hood	shown
spool	wood	known
school	good	own

Mount St. Helens Blew Its Top

"This is it!" Dr. David Johnston shouted into his radio. The earth shook. Rocks slid down the mountain. Cracks appeared in the ground. Then there was an awful sound and a powerful explosion. Dr. Johnston was dead. What caused his death?

Mount St. Helens is a mountain. It is also a volcano. Early in 1980, this mountain was peaceful. It was full of trees and flowers. The volcano had been quiet for 123 years. But now it was sending out clouds of smoke. A large bump had formed on its north side. Scientists thought it might come to life soon, so they kept watch.



The scientists were not wrong. On May 18, 1980, the north side of the mountain blew off. Hot ash, rock, and dirt flew 12 miles into the sky. Ash landed a thousand miles away.

Mount St. Helens is still active. No one knows when it may blow its top again.

Quiz Questions

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

Mount St. Helens is a _____ and a volcano. In 1980, scientists thought the quiet volcano might come to life _____.

mountain, saw, soon, sound

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

On May 18, 1980, the _____ started to shake. Rocks rolled

_____ Mount St. Helens.

down, ground, now, sound

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

A _____ explosion shook the earth. Ash landed a _____ miles away.

cause, ground, powerful, thousand

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

The scientists _____ Mount St. Helens blow its top. They don't _____ when it will blow again.

cause, know, now, saw

5. Write a sentence that tells how the scientists knew Mount St. Helens might blow its top.

Word List

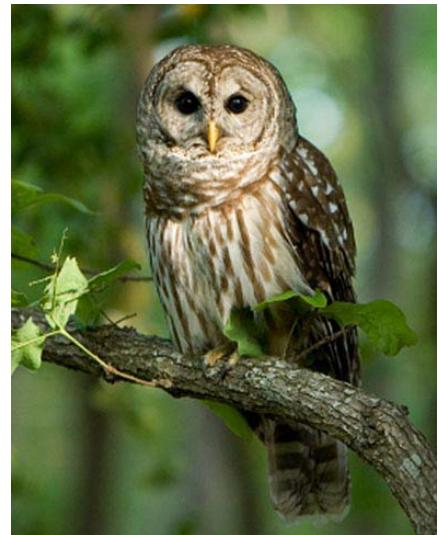
caused	mountain	powerful
paused	fountain	power
paws	thousand	flower
saw	sound	shower
law	ground	now
lawful	cloud	down
awful	shout	frown

Owls

Owls are found all around the world. The word "owl" means howl, but not all owls howl. Barn owls hiss, and great horned owls growl. Screech owls whistle up and down the scale.

Owls can see well with their round eyes. However, they cannot move their eyes the way we do. They must turn their heads to look to the side. Their heads go almost all the way around.

Owls are not great nest builders. Some owls nest in hollow trees, and others nest in bell towers. A few nest in burrows dug in the ground by other animals.



An owl will eat almost any small animal. When an owl sees a mouse, it swoops down to the ground. It pounces on its prey. It breaks the spine of the mouse with its bill. Then it opens its mouth wide and swallows the mouse whole.

Quiz Questions

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

The word "owl" means _____ . Some owls live in holes in the _____ , and others live in trees or bell towers.
ground, house, howl, round

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

Owls have _____ eyes. They cannot move their eyes from side to side, but they can move their heads almost all the way _____.
around, down, mouse, round

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

Owls might eat a small animal, such as a _____. When they see one, they swoop down and _____ on their prey.
ground, mouse, mouth, pounce

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

Screech owls make sounds that go up and _____ the scale. Barn owls hiss, and other owls _____.
around, down, however, howl

5. Write a sentence telling how the eyes of owls are different from our eyes.

Word List

mouse	howl	however
house	fowl	downtown
grouse	growl	seafowl
ground	owl	townhouse
sound	down	soundtrack
south	town	mousetrap
mouth	crown	loudmouth

The Awful Shuttle Launch

It was dawn, January 28, 1986. Six astronauts were getting ready for a launch. Christa McAuliffe was getting ready too. She was not an astronaut. She taught school. She was going to be the first teacher in space.

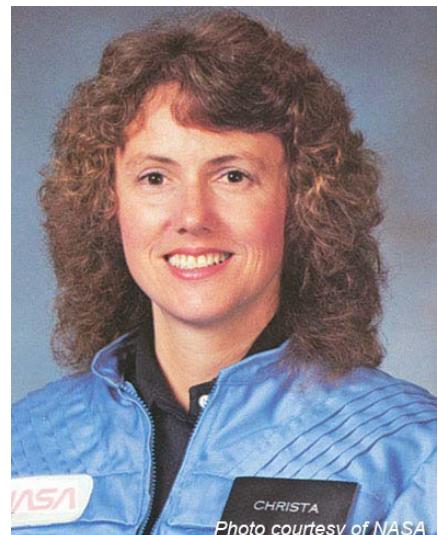
The day was cold. Some people thought it was too cold. They said the cold might cause the O-rings to leak. The launch went on as planned.

Many people came to watch. Christa's husband was there. He brought their son and daughter. Others saw it on television.

The lift-off went well. Then something awful happened. The Challenger blew up. All of the people inside died.

What went wrong? An O-ring leaked because it was too cold. The launch should have been stopped that day.

There were no launches for two years. Some people lost their jobs. New rules were made for launches. They were safer, but that awful launch still haunts us.



Quiz Questions

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

Christa McAuliffe _____ children in school. But on January 28, 1986,

Christa and six _____ were getting ready for a space launch.

astronauts, daughters, taught, thought

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

The day of the _____ was very cold. Some people thought that the O-rings

might leak _____ it was so cold.

astronauts, because, launch, taught

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

The shuttle was launched. Then something _____ happened; the shuttle blew up. What _____ it to explode?

awful, because, caused, taught

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

Christa's family and millions of others were watching and _____ the shuttle explosion. New rules made launches safer, but that awful launch still _____ us.

all, caused, haunts, saw

5. Write a sentence telling why the launch should have been stopped that day.

Word List

all	saw	launch
hall	raw	paunch
pall	law	haunt
tall	lawn	taunt
stall	yawn	pause
small	dawn	cause
ballpark	drawn	because

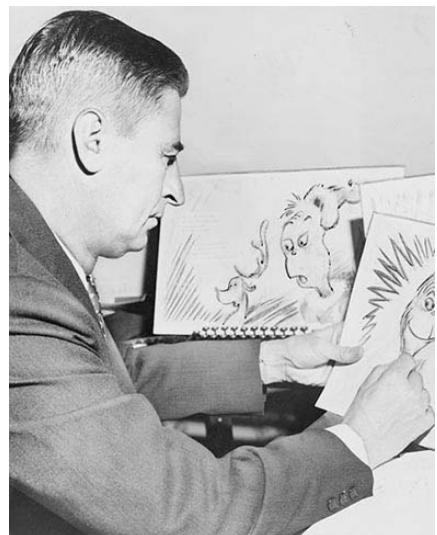
The Doodles of Dr. Seuss

Who wrote The Cat in the Hat? Who drew the pictures? Who rhymed words like room, boom, and ga-zoom in his books? Theodor Seuss Geisel was his name. His family knew him as Ted. We know him as Dr. Seuss.

Ted grew up a few blocks from a zoo. He often drew pictures of zoo animals. He drew funny-looking animals. When Ted was 12, he entered a contest. He drew a cartoon for the newspaper—and won!

In high school, an art teacher told Ted to draw by the rules. But Ted wanted to do things his own way. He continued to doodle funny pictures. He wrote funny stories for the school newspaper too. His friends thought his doodles and stories were cool.

Later, Ted wrote books as Dr. Seuss. He wrote more than 60 books. For most of the books, he drew the pictures too. People loved these unique books. Which Dr. Seuss books have you read?



Quiz Questions

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

Theodor Seuss Geisel's family _____ him as Ted. Ted's friends thought his drawings were _____.

cool, drew, knew, news

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

Dr. Seuss wrote books for children. He _____ the pictures for his books and rhymed words like ga-zoom, boom, and _____.

cool, drew, grew, room

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

Dr. Seuss _____ up close to a zoo. So, many of his _____ were of funny-looking animals.

doodles, drew, grew, knew

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

When Ted was in _____, his art teacher wanted him to draw by the rules instead of making doodles. But many people liked his _____ and they bought his books.

cartoons, drew, newspapers, school

5. Write a sentence telling how Ted won the contest.

Word List

drew	newspaper	cool
grew	newsroom	school
crew	newborn	tool
flew	newfound	too
blew	dewdrop	zoo
new	crewmate	zoom
knew	viewpoint	room

The Mohawk

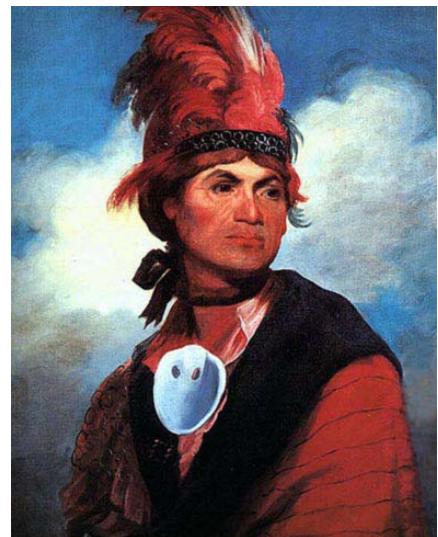
Long ago, the Mohawk lived near rivers. Eagles and hawks flew above them. The Mohawk often saw deer and fawns walking together.

The Mohawk lived in longhouses. The houses were big. Some houses were 200 feet long. Many families lived together. Mothers, daughters, aunts, and sisters lived in the same house. A married man lived with his wife's family.

The women worked from dawn to dark. They took care of the longhouse. They grew vegetables and fruit. They cooked and made clothes. They cared for all the children.

The men caught fish with nets and spears. They left home in the fall to hunt. They taught their sons to hunt.

One time, the Mohawk had a visitor. The visitor talked to them about peace. The Mohawk listened. They helped make the Great Law of Peace. It ended the fighting among some tribes. Ideas from this law are in the Constitution of the United States.



Quiz Questions

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

Mohawk women started work at _____. Mothers, _____, sisters, and aunts worked together.

daughters, dawn, fall, hawks

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

Mohawk men _____ fish and hunted in the fall. They _____ their sons to fish and hunt.

caught, talk, taught, walked

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

One time, the Mohawk _____ a visitor coming to them. The visitor wanted to
to them.

saw, talk, taught, walked

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

The _____ listened to their visitor. Then they helped make the Great
of Peace.

Daughters, Dawn, Law, Mohawk

5. Write a sentence telling how the visitor helped the Mohawk.

Word List

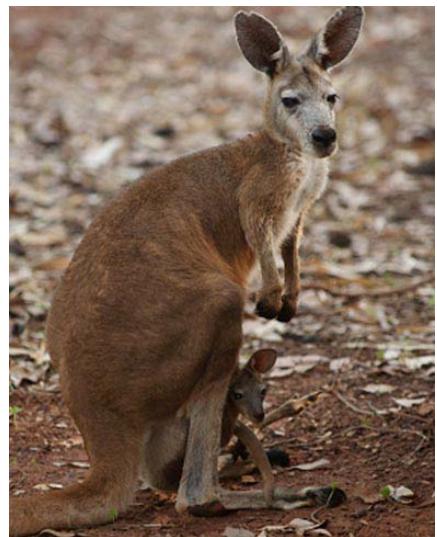
fall	fawn	caught
all	dawn	taught
call	pawn	daughter
tall	paw	slaughter
stall	caw	aught
small	law	fraught
squall	saw	naughty

The Red Kangaroo

The day was hot. The red kangaroo dug a shallow hole in the dirt and lay down. She panted and drooled. She licked her arms. The red kangaroo knew doing these things would make her cool. She rested a few hours. When flies flew too near, she kicked up dirt to shoo them away.

In the cool evening, she hopped around, looking for food. She found some grass and began to chew. A front grinding tooth fell out. Her other teeth moved forward. A new tooth grew in the back of her mouth. She could grow 16 grinding teeth during her life.

The red kangaroo sat down, using her tail as a stool. She groomed herself with her long toes. A joey peeked out of her pouch. Soon she would boot him out to make room for a new baby.



Quiz Questions

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

The red _____ was trying to stay _____ on a hot day.
cool, kangaroo, shoo, tooth

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

The red kangaroo _____, licked her arms, and tried to _____ flies away.
drooled, grew, shoo, soon

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

The red kangaroo started to _____ some grass, and a front _____ fell out.

chew, food, new, tooth

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

The red kangaroo's back teeth would _____ move forward to replace the lost tooth. She could grow 16 _____ teeth.

chew, cooled, new, soon

5. Write a sentence that tells why the red kangaroo boots her joey out of her pouch.

Word List

new	food	tooth
dew	mood	booth
flew	moon	boot
grew	soon	root
crew	loon	room
chew	loot	groom
knew	boot	broom