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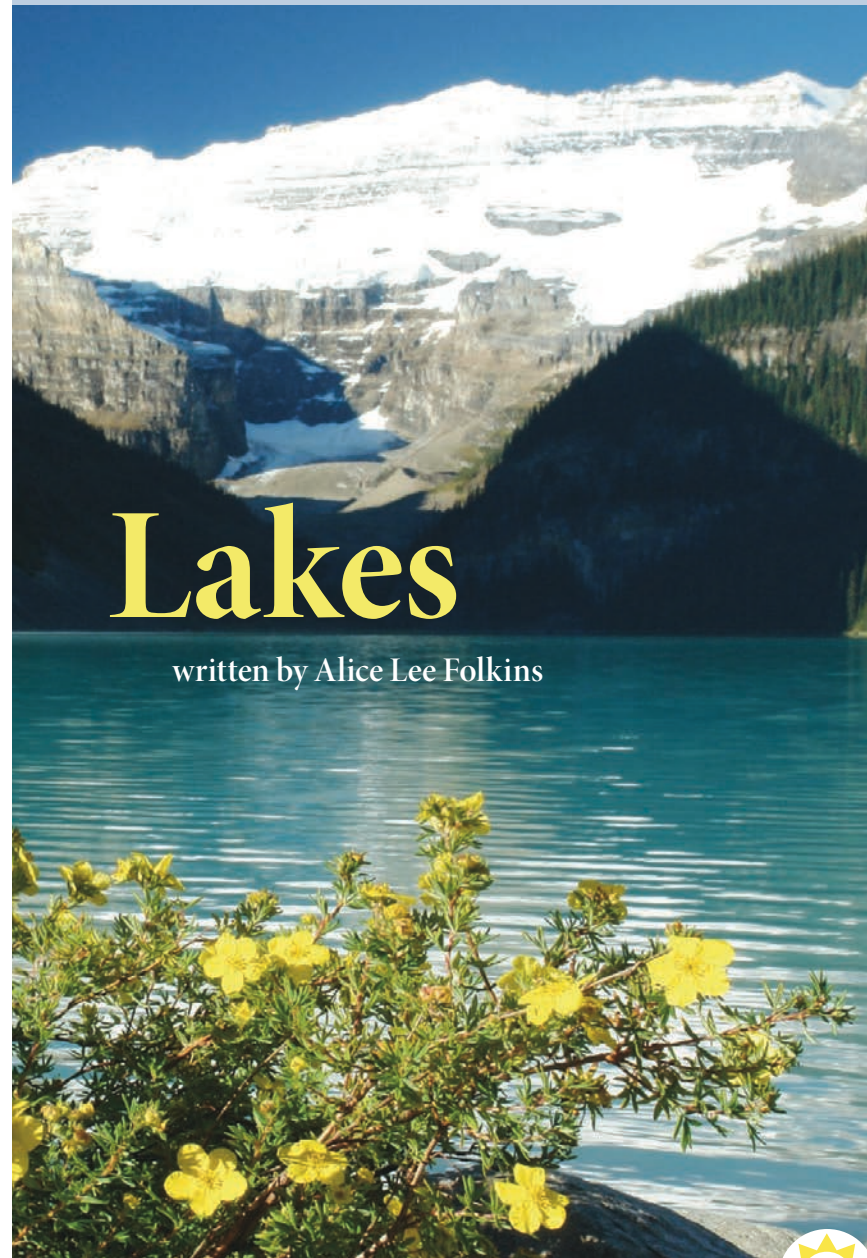
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JUNE 2010 EDITION

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Getting Ready for Grade 4™

Places to Visit in Summer



Lakes

written by Alice Lee Folkins

Summer Reads™ 

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Dear Fourth Grader,

I am a teacher who has studied how children learn to read well. What I have learned has been used to write SummerReads and programs like QuickReads® and Ready Readers.

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Have a reading-filled summer!

Elfrieda (Freddy) Hiebert, Ph.D.

Inventor of the TEXT model

Lakes

Photo: View from Palisade Head in Minnesota's Tettegouche State Park on the North Shore of Lake Superior, August 2008. Released into the public domain by Kablammo/Wikimedia Commons.

Introduction**Lakes**

Water is a very big part of life on Earth. About 326 million trillion gallons of water cover Earth. A single gallon has 16 cups in it. That means that 326 million trillion gallons is a lot of water! Even your body is more water than anything else. When you are eight or nine years old, you have about 4 gallons or 64 cups of water in your body.

In the summer, we especially need water to keep our bodies from getting too hot. People often visit places like lakes or oceans in the summer to cool off. If you can't travel to a lake or ocean, you might visit a swimming pool. Or if you can't do that, you can take an imaginary trip to a lake in this book. Stay cool!

Lakes

Thousands of Lakes



Lakes are not as big as oceans but there are many more lakes than oceans on Earth. Lakes are bodies of water that are inland. Ponds that are also inland bodies of water but lakes are usually bigger and deeper.

There are several million lakes on Earth. That means that there is probably at least one lake close to where you live. Some lakes are small and others are large. The lake with the

largest surface area is Lake Superior. Part of Lake Superior is in the United States. Part of it is in Canada.

Canada has the most lakes of any country on Earth. Minnesota in the United States claims to be the land of 10,000 lakes. Manitoba lies just north of Minnesota in Canada. Manitoba claims to have 100,000 lakes. That's ten times the number of lakes in Minnesota!

Claims about numbers of lakes can be hard to prove. Because many lakes are very small, people sometimes can't agree on whether they are lakes or ponds. There are some large lakes among the 10,000 lakes in Minnesota and the 100,000 lakes in Manitoba. But none are nearly as large as Lake Superior.

Perhaps you will visit a lake this summer to swim, fish, or cool off. Even if you can't visit a lake this summer, you can visit two of the world's most interesting lakes through reading. Read on for your imaginary visits to the Panama Canal and the Great Salt Lake.

Lakes

The Panama Canal



There is a place in the country of Panama where the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans are only 51 miles apart. From the time that Europeans came to the Americas, they wanted to get ships from one ocean to the other without traveling around South America. The first plan to build a canal for ships to sail between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans failed.

The next plan worked and the Panama Canal was opened in 1914. This is how a ship moves from one ocean to

the other through the Panama Canal. The ship goes into a chamber. Since the gates close or lock after the ship goes in, the chambers in a canal are called locks. The first lock is at the level of the sea. When the gate has closed behind the ship, huge amounts of water pour into the chamber. As the water level gets higher, the ship floats higher too.

When the ship has risen to 85 feet above sea level, a gate opens. The ship moves along a long waterway that is 85 feet above sea level. When the ship nears the end of the waterway, it goes into another chamber. This time, water is drained from the lock. As water drains, the ship moves lower. When the ship is at sea level, the gate opens. The ship is now on the other ocean.

The Panama Canal would not work without the waterway that is 85 feet above sea level. This waterway is a very large lake that was made by closing off rivers and streams.

Lakes

The Great Salt Lake



The water from most lakes tastes like the water from a tap in your house. This kind of water is called freshwater. Almost all lakes are filled with freshwater. However, the water in the Great Salt Lake of Utah is saltwater, not freshwater. In fact, it is up to nine times saltier than the saltwater in the oceans. If you tried to drink this water, you would want to spit it as fast as you could.

The water that flows into lakes from rivers first falls to earth as rain or snow. Rainwater or snow tastes fresh, not salty. The water that runs into the Great Salt Lake, like all lakes, is fresh. What happens to the water once it runs into the Great Salt Lake to make it so salty?

As the water runs over the ground, it touches rocks and soil. Some parts of the rocks and soil break up or dissolve in water. As this water flows into the Great Salt Lake, it brings in dissolved materials, such as salt. Unlike most lakes, the Great Salt Lake does not have streams and rivers that flow out of it. The dissolved material, including salt, cannot flow out of the lake. Water can only leave the Great Salt Lake through evaporation. Evaporation is when water turns into a gas in the air. Evaporation only takes pure water out of the lake. The salt does not evaporate. It stays in the lake. That's why there is a very salty lake in Utah, far from any ocean.

Lakes

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	1st Read	2nd Read	3rd Read	Sharing	Smoother
Introduction					
Thousands of Lakes					
The Panama Canal					
The Great Salt Lake					

Comprehension questions

Thousands of Lakes

1. True or false? There are more oceans than lakes.
 true false
2. Lakes differ from oceans because _____.
 lakes are smaller than oceans
 you can't swim in the oceans
 lakes are inland, whereas oceans surround land

The Panama Canal

3. True or false? The Panama Canal connects the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean.
 true false
4. How do ships get through the Panama Canal?
 Ships sail through the canal at sea level
 Ships are raised and lowered in a set of locks
 Ships sail on an inland lake for part of the 51-mile canal
 All of the above

The Great Salt Lake

5. Indicate the type of water in the example below:

Great Salt Lake saltwater freshwater
 Atlantic Ocean saltwater freshwater
 Water from the tap saltwater freshwater
 Rain or snow saltwater freshwater

6. How did the Great Salt Lake get so salty?
 People put salt from the ocean into the lake
 It is part of the Atlantic Ocean
 The sun dries up the water in the lake, leaving behind the salt
 People store salt in the Great Salt Lake so that it can be used later

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Cover Photo: Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) landing in its nest, Kodiak Island, Alaska, June 2002.
Public domain image by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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Getting Ready for Grade 4™

Nature in Summer



Birds

written by Alice Lee Folkins

Summer Reads™ 

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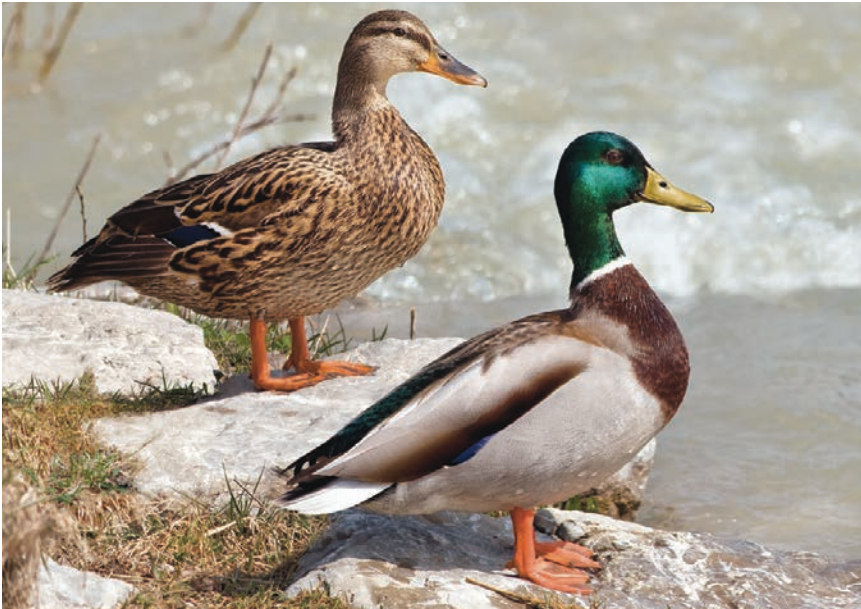
Birds**Introduction****Birds**

No matter where you live, you can see and hear birds this summer. Even if you live in a tall apartment building in a busy city, there will be birds nearby. All birds have feathers, but not all birds can fly. A few kinds of birds only swim or walk but never fly. Many birds that fly can also walk on land. Some kinds of birds can fly, swim and walk!

If you live in the north of the United States, you will see some different birds this summer than if you live in the south. That is because many birds migrate or travel from winter to summer homes. Many kinds of birds travel long distances to get from one home to another. Some of the birds in your neighborhood live there all year round. But birds that migrate are present either during the summer or winter. If you look closely, you may be surprised at how many different kinds of birds live near you.

Birds

Bird Feet



Birds' feet are not all the same. Birds' feet depend on how and where they spend their time. Birds that swim a lot, like ducks, have skin that stretches between the toes. These are called webbed feet and they help ducks to be good swimmers. But webbed feet make it hard for ducks to move on land. Ducks do not use their feet directly in getting food. Can you imagine trying to pick up or tear food with webbed feet?

Other birds like hawks and owls use their feet directly in getting food. Instead of webs, these birds have strong sharp claws called talons. Talons help these birds grab, hold, and kill smaller animals for food. Talons help these birds get food but they are not useful for swimming.

Another type of birds sits or perches on branches of trees. Blackbirds and robins are birds of this type. These birds even sleep while perching. What keeps these birds from falling off their perches while they are sleeping? Perching birds have four flexible toes. Three of the toes point forward and one toe points backward. These flexible toes make it possible for birds to grab and hang onto a perch. When a perching bird sits, a tendon on the back of its leg locks the toes around the branch. With its toes locked, a sleeping bird does not fall from its perch. When the bird stands up, its toes let go. Then it can fly away.

Birds

Bird Nests



When bird chicks hatch from eggs, they are small and cannot stay alive on their own. The chicks need a place to stay warm and safe from animals that might harm them. Adult birds make a warm safe place by building a nest. This nest is where parent birds keep the eggs warm. Once the eggs hatch, the nest is the place where the chicks live until they can fly and find their own food.

Birds use different materials to make nests. Often, the outside of the nest is made of small sticks and grass. To make the inside soft and warm, birds use their own feathers or other soft materials. Some birds make nests high in a tree to protect the eggs and chicks. Other birds build nests on the ground but hide them so that other animals cannot find the eggs or chicks.

Building nests can take time. Birds of prey, like hawks, may take a few weeks to build their nests. Small birds, like hummingbirds, may take only a few days. Wherever the nests are built, adult birds work hard to protect the eggs and the chicks.

By summer, most chicks have left the nest. But the nests may still be there for you to see. You might see nests in trees close to your house. Sometimes, there are nests in spaces close to the roofs of houses and apartment buildings. Look around you this summer for nests that birds have used.

Birds

Words for Groups of Birds



Often a special word is used to describe a group of the same kind of animals. A group of lions is called a pride. A group of cows is called a herd. The common word for a group of birds is a flock. But some kinds of birds have special group names. For example, a group of geese is called a gaggle. It is not clear why people began using gaggle to describe geese. Perhaps it is because gaggle is similar to the sound that geese

make. Whatever the reason, the phrase “gaggle of geese” has been used in English for several hundred years.

A group of doves is sometimes called a cote of doves. Doves were once raised for food. They were kept in places called cotes. That’s why people sometimes call a group of doves a cote.

Perhaps the most unusual name for a group of birds is that used for crows. The name for a group of crows is “a murder of crows.” It is not exactly clear why this name was given to a group of crows. But a murder of crows has been used to describe a group of crows for a long time.

As you watch birds this summer, think about what names you might give a group of the same kind of birds. What about a name for a group of people doing the same thing like eating pizza or listening to the same kind of music?

Birds**Rate your thinking and reading**

- ✓ Put a check each time you read one of the chapters of the book.
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Bird Feet					
Bird Nests					
Words for Groups of Birds					

Comprehension questions**Bird Feet**

1. Webbed feet help ducks _____.
- fly in the sky
 - eat their food
 - swim in the water
 - walk on land

2. How do perching birds stay on a perch?
-
-
-

Bird Nests

3. Why do bird chicks need a nest?
- Because the bird chicks can't fly
 - Because the bird chicks need a place to stay warm
 - Because other animals want to hurt the bird chicks
 - All of the above
4. What are some materials that birds use to make nests?

.....

.....

.....

Words for Groups of Birds

5. Which of the following names is not a name for a group of birds?
- Cote
 - Gaggle
 - Bed
 - Murder

6. Why is a group of doves called a cote?
-
-
-

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Cover Photo: A cloud-to-ground lightning strike during a nighttime thunderstorm.
Taken by C. Clark. Released into the public domain by NOAA.

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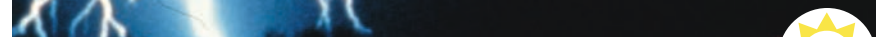
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Summer Weather

Thunderstorms

written by Alice Lee Folkins



Summer Reads™ 

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Inventor of the TEXT model

Thunderstorms

Photo: Rain falls on a field in Germany during a storm in 2006.
Released into the public domain by Cremedia at de.wikipedia.

Introduction**Thunderstorms**

For many people around the world, summer brings thunderstorms. Warm wet air and strong winds help to create thunderstorms. But thunderstorms don't happen in every part of the United States. The states along the Pacific Ocean don't get as many thunderstorms as the states along the Gulf of Mexico. Some areas of Florida have thunderstorms once a day for most of the summer!

The best place to be during a thunderstorm is inside a building. Lightning from a thunderstorm can be very dangerous. Just before a thunderstorm, the air may feel like there is electricity in it. When people start feeling electricity in the air, they know a thunderstorm is on the way. People start heading inside buildings so they can be safe during a thunderstorm.

So how are thunderstorms created? You can read about it here without getting wet!

Thunderstorms

Hot Air, Cold Air



Part of what makes summers so hot is also what causes thunderstorms. As heat from the sun beats down on Earth, the heat evaporates some of the water in lakes and oceans. The evaporated water stays in the air. This evaporated water makes the air feel heavy and humid. Humid air is what makes you feel hot and sticky during the summer.

Warm humid air usually does not stay in one place. The wind can move it higher in the sky where it will cool off. When warm humid air cools, it forms clouds. As more water is moved from lakes and oceans to the air, the clouds get bigger and bigger.

In summer, the air near the ground is hotter than it is during other seasons of the year. When this hot air mixes with cool air from another area, there will be changes in the weather. Greater differences between the temperatures of the hot and cold air will cause greater changes in the weather. Imagine putting an ice cube in a warm drink. As soon as the ice hits the warm drink, it will crack and pop. But, if you put the ice cube in a cool drink, it will not crack or pop as much. When warmer and cooler clouds get close to one another, there may be some popping and cracking as the weather changes. There may be more clouds or storms. A thunderstorm may be on its way.

Thunderstorms

Thunder and Lightning



Summer thunderstorms can be exciting to watch from inside a building. First, you see dark clouds gathering. Suddenly, you see a bolt of lightning. Then you hear the thunder. Kaboom! Finally, you see a lot of rain coming down. It's a good idea to wait inside than to go out during the storm. The storm will probably be over in about an hour but it's much safer inside than out.

The bright bolt of lightning you saw is really electricity. It is the same electricity that we use to power our lights and TVs.

There is a lot of energy in a lightning bolt, enough to power a light bulb for about 100 days. The Earth receives several hundred millions of lightning bolts each year. This many lightning bolts add up to a vast amount of energy.

People usually hear thunder soon after they see a bolt of lightning. You can use this fact to find out how far you are from the storm. As soon as you see a bolt of lightning, start counting the seconds. When you hear the thunder, stop counting. Every five seconds from the time you see the lightning bolt until you hear thunder equals about one mile. If you counted 10 seconds, then the thunderstorm is about 2 miles away. If you see lightning but don't hear thunder, it means that the thunderstorm is more than 12 miles away. That's too far to hear the thunder.

Thunderstorms

Rain



You already know that the water in lakes and rivers comes from precipitation. Precipitation is any form of water that falls from the sky such as rain and snow. A heavy rainfall can drop as much as two inches of rain per hour. How much water is that? Imagine if someone built walls around a football field and gathered all of the rainwater. If two inches of rain fell in an hour, you would have more than 70,000 gallons of water.

Photo: People wait to be rescued from flooding caused by rain from a tropical storm in Kingfisher, Oklahoma, August 2007. Taken by Marvin Nauman. Released into the public domain by FEMA.

That's enough water for you to fill a bathtub every single day for four years!

That may seem like a lot of water. But people need water for many other reasons than staying clean. We need water to drink and cook. Crops and animals need water too. All of this water comes from precipitation like rain.

Of course, too much rain can cause problems. Floods happen when rain doesn't have enough time to flow into nearby rivers and lakes. One way to think about this is to observe what happens when you let water out of the bathtub. It takes time for all the water to leave the tub because the drain is too small for all the water to leave at once.

Even when there is flooding, rain is not lost. Rain that falls in one state can be stored in the lakes and rivers of another state. Your next glass of water may come from rain that fell hundreds of miles from your home.

Thunderstorms

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Hot Air, Cold Air					
Thunder and Lightning					
Rain					

Comprehension questions

Hot Air, Cold Air

1. We described how clouds normally form during warm weather. Can you put these events in the right order?

- _____ As humid air cools, clouds form
- _____ The heated air evaporates water in lakes and oceans
- _____ The sun heats up the air near the ground
- _____ The wind moves the warm humid air into the sky

2. True or false? Great differences in the temperature of hot air and cold air cause small changes in the weather.
- true false

Thunder and Lightning

3. If it takes 5 seconds to hear the thunder after you see a bolt of lightning, how far away was the lightning?

.....

.....

.....

4. True or false? The electricity in lightning is the same electricity that powers TVs and light bulbs.
- true false

Rain

5. Why is too much rain a bad thing?

.....

.....

.....

6. True or false? If it rains a lot in one area, the extra water is lost forever.
- true false

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Cover Photo: A girl swims underwater in a swimming pool.
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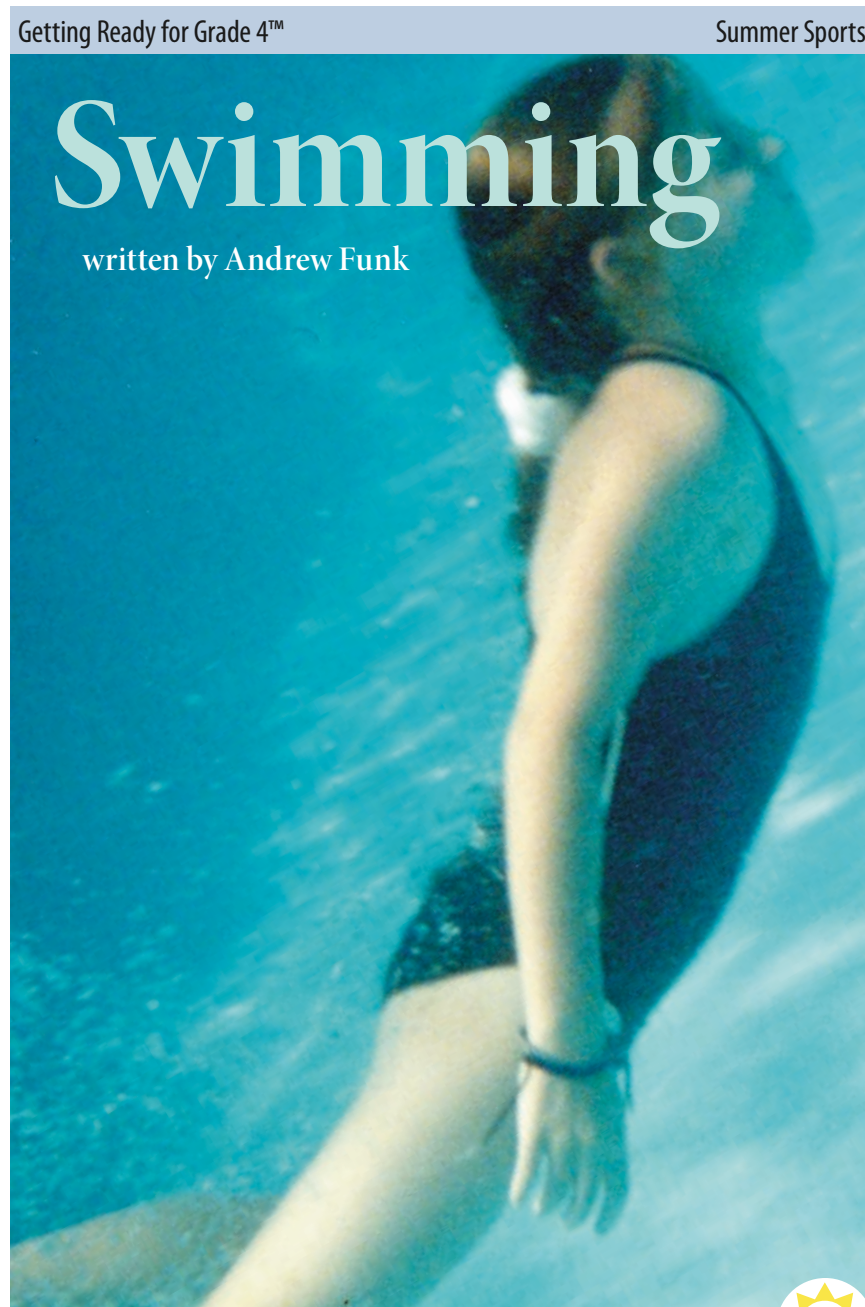
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Getting Ready for Grade 4™

Summer Sports

Swimming

written by Andrew Funk



Summer Reads™ 

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Inventor of the TEXT model

Swimming

Photo: A U.S. Air Force officer swims in a race at the Military World Games in Hyderabad, India, October 2007. Taken by Jennifer A. Villalovos. Released into the public domain by the U.S. Navy.

Introduction

Swimming

There are lots of reasons why you might want to go swimming this summer. Swimming is a great way to cool off. Swimming is also an excellent way to get exercise. You can also play lots of games in the water with your friends, once you know how to swim.

Swimming can be an enjoyable sport. But it is important to know the rules and be safe. Be certain to swim only where there is a lifeguard. Lifeguards make certain that everyone goes by the rules and stays safe. It's also a good idea to learn the basics of swimming. If you don't know how to swim, find a place this summer to learn how. If you already know how to swim, find a place to practice so that you become a strong and fast swimmer. And don't forget to put on sunscreen!

Swimming

Different Swimming Strokes



Whether they are young or old, new swimmers usually start out with the same swimming stroke that dogs use when they swim. This stroke is called the dog paddle. It's easy to learn to dog paddle but dog paddling isn't very fast.

Most swimmers learn the breaststroke next. The breaststroke begins by lying in the water with your front side

down. You move both arms in a circle. You raise your head out of the water to breathe once during each stroke. You also need to kick your legs in a circular motion like a frog's kick.

The fastest swimmers use a stroke called the front crawl. To do this stroke, you lie face down in the water. You move your arms like a windmill. At the same time, you move your legs up and down like scissors. Since your face is in the water, you have to turn your head to the side every two or three strokes to breathe.

There are other swimming strokes. An example of another stroke is the backstroke or back crawl. As you can tell from the name, this stroke is like the front crawl except that you lie on your back. A good thing about a backstroke is that your face is out of the water. That means that breathing is not a problem. But there's another problem. You can't see where you are going! Choose your strokes with care!

Swimming

Swimwear



The clothes worn by swimmers have changed a great deal over time. About 200 years ago, women wore dresses made of wool to swim. Wool absorbs water. That meant that the dresses got heavy in the water, making it hard for women to swim and not sink.

Today, a swimming suit is made to fit the body snugly. A

snug fit allows a swimmer to glide through the water. The suit is made of cloth that does not absorb water. Because the suit doesn't absorb water, the swimmer is carrying less weight and can move faster.

Another big change in swimwear is the wetsuit. A wetsuit covers almost the entire body with a close-fitting layer of special rubber. The rubber has very small bubbles of gas that make the suit lighter and better at keeping the body warm. A thin layer of water gets trapped between a person's skin and the inside of the suit. The body warms this small amount of water. Since the water can't get out, it helps to keep the body warm. A wetsuit makes it possible to swim and surf even in places where the water is cold.

Goggles are another addition to swimwear. Salt from ocean water or chemicals in swimming pools can hurt your eyes. By wearing goggles, swimmers can keep the salt and chemicals out of their eyes. Swimmers who want to keep salt and chemicals away from their noses can wear masks.

Swimming

Swimming Underwater



Humans can swim under water but only for short periods of time. After about two minutes, a human needs to return to the surface to get oxygen from the air.

There are animals that, like humans, use lungs for breathing. Some of these animals are much better underwater swimmers than humans. Whales can stay underwater for up to two hours without coming to the surface for air. Birds also

have lungs and many can stay underwater much longer than humans.

The best underwater swimmers are fish. Unlike humans, most fish breathe through gills that allow them to get oxygen from the water. Since they do not have to come to the surface, fish are excellent swimmers. Some fish can reach speeds of more than 40 miles per hour.

Almost all animals are born with either gills or lungs and have one or the other for their entire lives. But some animals are born with gills and then switch to lungs later in life. This means that they live in water for the first part of life and, later, breathe air and live on land. Frogs are an example of such animals. Frogs start out as eggs in the water. When the eggs hatch, tadpoles that breathe with gills come out. Later, tadpoles become frogs and the gills are gone. Frogs use lungs for breathing. Tadpoles can stay underwater but frogs can't. Frogs need to come to the water's surface to breathe.

Swimming

Rate your thinking and reading

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	1st Read	2nd Read	3rd Read	Sharing	Smoother
Introduction					
Different Swimming Strokes					
Swimwear					
Swimming Underwater					

Comprehension questions

Different Swimming Strokes

1. True or false? The dog paddle is the first swimming stroke most people learn.
 true false
2. Which of the following is *not* a kind of swimming stroke?
 Front crawl
 Backstroke
 Heat stroke
 Breaststroke

Swimwear

3. True or false? Goggles protect only the eyes from salt and chemicals.
 true false
4. A wetsuit keeps the body warm by _____.
 trapping a small layer of air between the suit and the body
 trapping a small layer of water between the suit and the body
 covering only the face
 heating the water outside the suit

Swimming Underwater

5. True or false? Fish do not need to come to the surface to breathe.
 true false
6. Tadpoles have gills to breathe in water. When they turn into frogs, how do they breathe?

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STAPLE HERE

Cover Photo: Helmets protect the heads of riders during a long-distance bike ride in Florida, December 2009. Taken by Tiffini M. Jones-Vanderwyst. Released into the public domain by the U.S. Navy.

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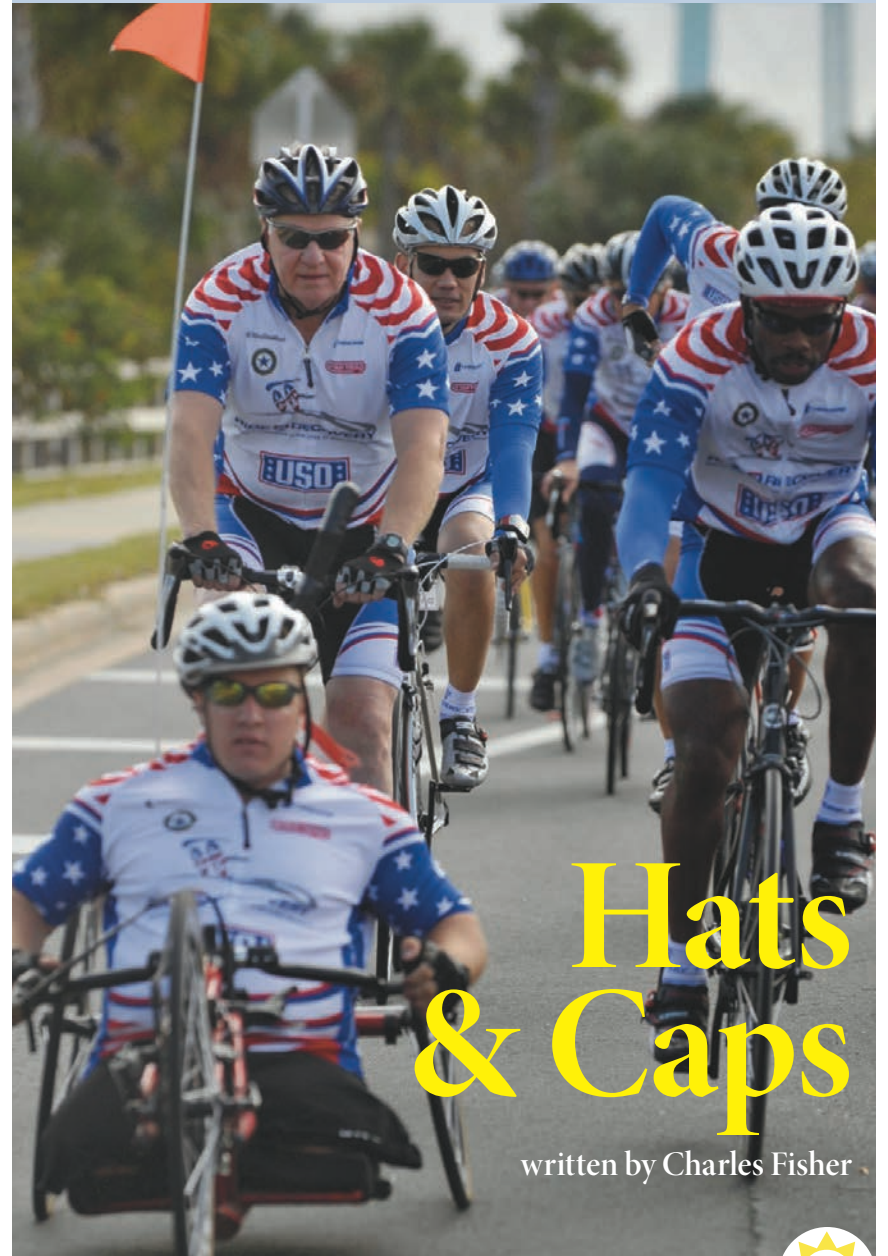
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JUNE 2010 EDITION

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Getting Ready for Grade 4™

Summer Fashion



Summer Reads™ 

Hats & Caps**Table of Contents**

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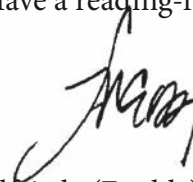
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Have a reading-filled summer!



Elfrieda (Freddy) Hiebert, Ph.D.

Inventor of the TEXT model

Hats & Caps

Photo: Students put on safety helmets before entering an earthquake simulator in Yokosuka, Japan, October 2008. Taken by Kari R. Bergman. Released into the public domain by the U.S. Navy.

Introduction**Hats and Caps**

Your head is usually exposed to the sun when you're outdoors in summer. That's why smart people cover their heads with hats and caps to protect them from the sun. Hats and caps protect your head from sunburn and possible sunstroke. But hats and caps do more than protect your head. They also provide shade for your eyes. You can see more clearly in the sunshine when you're wearing a hat or cap.

Headgear can also protect you from blows to your head. Hard hats or helmets can lessen, and even prevent, injuries from falls or accidents. Wearing a helmet when you ride a bicycle, skateboard or even a horse makes good sense.

But hats and caps do more than protect your head. Often, they can make a fashion statement. In a word, hats and caps can be... cool!

Hats & Caps

Hats



Hats usually have a crown and a brim. The crown of a person's head is the very top. And, yes, the crown of a hat covers the top of a person's head. The brim of a hat is attached to the bottom of the crown. The brim is usually made of stiff

material and makes a sort of shelf that sticks out all the way around the head.

A sun hat shades the face, neck and shoulders from the sun. Sun hats not only protect the head, neck and shoulders but also shade the eyes. Since sun hats have wide brims, they are prone to being blown off by the wind. As a result, modern sun hats often have a chinstrap. Tie down that chinstrap...or you'll lose your hat... and your shade.

The sombrero is another hat that is specially designed to protect the wearer from the sun. In Spanish, the word "sombrero" means "shade-maker." The sombrero has an unusually wide brim that is turned up at the edges. It is designed to shade the top of the head and the eyes from the sun. The brim of a sombrero is so big that it also gives shade for the neck and shoulders. We know that all of you are using sunscreen when you're out in the sun this summer. But you might want to think of adding a sombrero. It's big enough to give you all of the protection that you need!

Hats & Caps

Caps



Caps have always been different than hats. Hats have a broad brim and can be made of material like straw. Caps fit closely to people's heads and are usually made of soft fabrics. Adults used to wear sleeping caps at night. Sleeping caps aren't popular with adults anymore but caps for babies are common. In cold places, people of all ages wear stocking caps.

Caps with visors or bills have become popular in recent years. Visors have an interesting history. About 600 years ago,

soldiers began to put visors on their steel headpieces. These visors were also steel and were attached to the headpiece with hinges. When closed, the visor covered the upper part of the face. It had holes to allow the person wearing the headpiece to see and to breathe. Today, visors are made from fabric or plastic and are used to control the amount of light that reaches your eyes.

After visors were added to caps, they were often used when people wanted to shade their eyes. Tennis players were early users of visors and, later, caps with visors. Soon, players of summer sports other than tennis began to use caps with visors.

Now the most common cap with a visor is the baseball cap. Often it has a team or a place name on it. Baseball caps are no longer just for ball players. Now anyone can wear one. And the bill, which once pointed forward, can now point in any direction!

Hats & Caps



Helmets



A helmet is a kind of headwear that helps to protect the head from injury. Soldiers have worn helmets for thousands of years. Today, soldiers still wear helmets but so do workers in other jobs like firefighters. Workers at building sites also wear helmets called “hard hats.”

Helmets are also important for sports, not just certain jobs. In football and ice hockey, players wear helmets all the

time. In baseball, players wear them when they are up to bat.

Helmets are also important in sports such as bicycling, skateboarding, and horseback riding. In the United States, thousands of people visit the hospital every year because they have fallen from bicycles, skateboards, or horses. Many head injuries are prevented when people wear helmets.

The helmets that were worn thousands of years ago were big and heavy. Today, helmets are light in weight. The use of plastic means that helmets can be molded to fit people’s heads. Today, a helmet has a hard outer shell and some padding inside the shell. There is also a headband that a person can move around to make the helmet fit better. A chinstrap keeps the helmet in place.

It is always smart to wear a helmet whenever your head is in danger of injury. Some helmets have holes that allow air to flow through the helmet. Your head stays cool while the helmet still protects your head. Be smart and cool! Wear a helmet!

Hats & Caps

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	1st Read	2nd Read	3rd Read	Sharing	Smoother
Introduction					
Hats					
Caps					
Helmets					

Comprehension questions

Hats

1. True or false? The crown of a sun hat is the part that covers the top of the head.
 true false
2. How does wearing a wide brim hat like a sombrero help protect you from the sun?

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Caps

3. How are caps different from hats?

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4. True or false? In a baseball cap, the visor can also be called a “bill.”

true false

Helmets

5. Which of these people do *not* use a helmet?

- Firemen
- Ice hockey player
- Farmer
- Soldier

6. When would you wear a hard hat?

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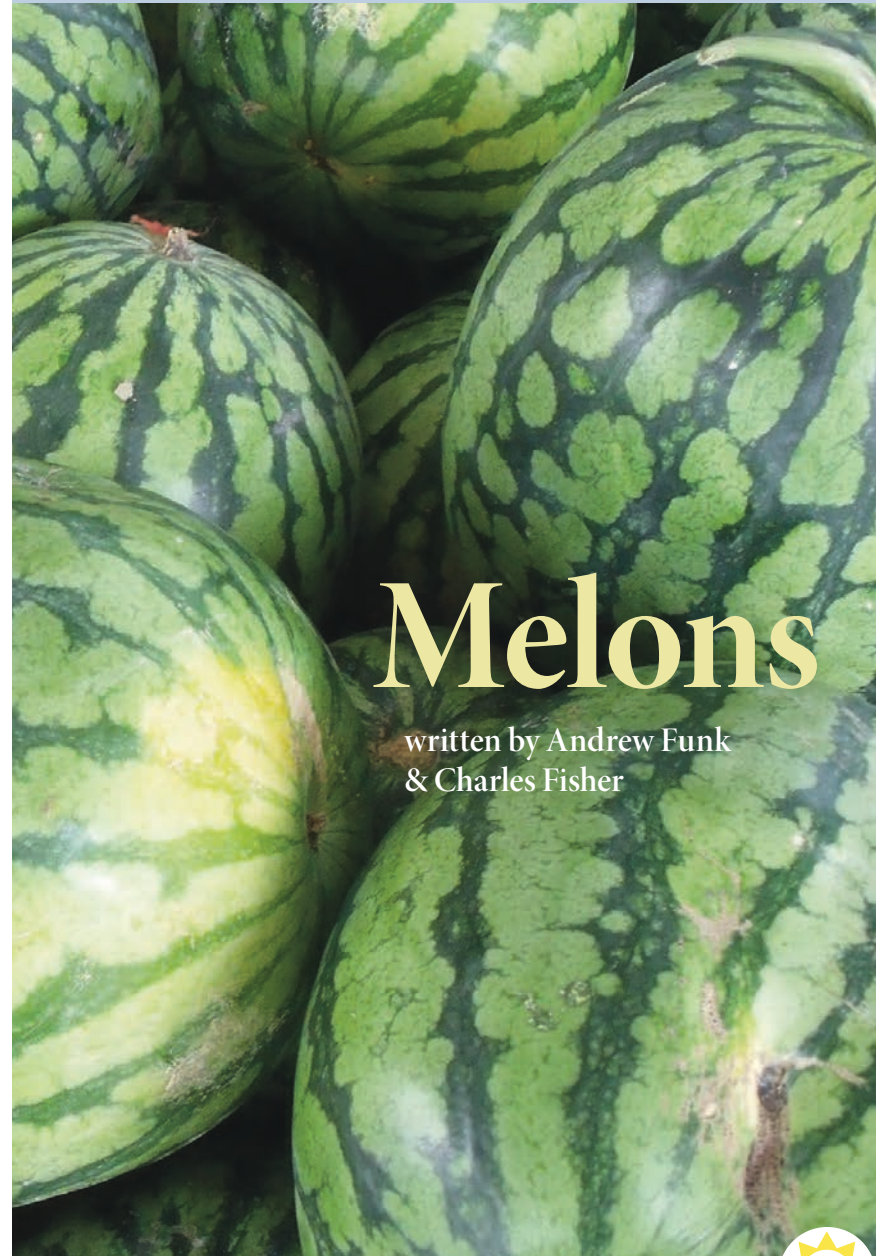


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FIRST EDITION, JULY 2010



Melons

written by Andrew Funk
& Charles Fisher

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Elfrieda (Freddy) Hiebert, Ph.D.

Inventor of the TEXT model

Melons

Photo: A square watermelon for sale in a shop in Japan, January 2007.
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Introduction

Melons are sweet fruits that people have enjoyed for thousands of years. Most melons grow on vines, have thick tough skins, and contain sweet fleshy fruit inside.

Most melons are round or oval. However, people have discovered how to make melons grow in strange shapes. In Japan, farmers put clear glass boxes over young melons. The melons grow into the shape of the box! Since then, people have grown melons in other strange shapes like hearts.

The most common melon in America is the watermelon. If you ever wondered how the watermelon got its name, here is a fact that should give you a clue. About 92% of a watermelon is water. For many people, nothing says summer like a picnic with watermelon. Since melons are summer fruits, eat them for snacks this summer. They will be hard to find in the winter!

Melons

Growing Melons



Why are melons summer fruits? For one thing, melons need at least three months to grow. That's why melons need to be planted in spring. But they also need a long stretch of hot weather to ripen. This is what makes the melon sweet and

tasty. Usually, melons are grown in areas where the weather is hot during the summer. In the United States, more than 75% of all watermelons are grown in southern and western states like California and Texas. But watermelons and other kinds of melons grow well in other parts of the country too.

As a melon plant grows, it produces flowers. Each flower can be the start of a melon. Just like other fruit plants, melon plants need help to grow tasty melons. We wouldn't have as many tasty melons if it were not for bees pollinating the melon flowers. As bees visit flowers, they get pollen on their legs and bodies. Some pollen that is already on the bee's body may rub off and stick to the part of the flower that makes the fruit. In order to have melons grow, there have to be some bees to carry the pollen from flower to flower.

Farmers often place beehives near their melon fields. Without bees, farmers would have to use a tiny brush to pollinate each flower. Next time you see a bee near a flower, leave it alone. It's doing important work!

Melons

Kinds of Melons



There are two kinds of melons: muskmelons and watermelons. Some muskmelons, like cantaloupes, have rough skins. Other muskmelons, like honeydews, have smooth skins. Cantaloupes and honeydews may look different on the outside, but they are still the same kind of melons. All muskmelons have a hollow center with some stringy material holding the seeds in place. Most muskmelons ripen in late summer or early fall. Their skins can be yellow, pale green, or orange.

Watermelons typically have less flavor than muskmelons and contain more water. Usually, watermelons are heavier

than muskmelons, but some are as small as cantaloupes. The most popular watermelons have green rinds and black seeds. The flesh of a watermelon is typically red, but it can also be white, yellow or pink.

Some people love to eat watermelon but they hate the seeds. Scientists and farmers have found ways to produce watermelons that don't have seeds. But seedless watermelons don't make much pollen. Smart farmers plant seedless watermelons near watermelons that have seeds and lots of pollen. When bees visit, they pollinate both kinds of watermelon.

When watermelons are picked, farmers have to separate the seedless from the seeded watermelons. Farmers can usually tell which is which by just looking at the watermelons. Most farmers get good at telling them apart. But sometimes they make mistakes. People may think that they bought a seedless watermelon at the store. But, when they slice it up, the seeds will tell them that the farmer got it wrong.

Melons

Fun with Melons



A slice of watermelon on a summer day is a favorite snack for many Americans. Watermelons usually weigh between 15 and 35 pounds. On average, every American eats 15 pounds of watermelon, or one small watermelon, each year!

Watermelons are so popular that they are the source of contests. One is to see who can eat the most watermelon in a short time. Many people claim to have found special ways to

win these contests. Some people swallow the seeds. They say that they save time by not spitting out the seeds. Other people take small bites. They claim that they can eat more because smaller bites are easier to swallow than bigger bites.

There are also “seed spitting” contests. In these contests, people try to spit watermelon seeds as far as they can. The person who can spit a seed the longest distance is the winner.

People also have contests to grow the biggest watermelon. Some of the winning watermelons have weighed 200 pounds or more! If you want to join in on the watermelon fun, this is probably the least messy of the watermelon contests.

Why are watermelons such a treat in the summer heat? Since watermelons are made mostly of water, a piece of watermelon is like having a cool, sweet drink. But be careful! People are not the only ones who like watermelon. If you leave a slice out at a picnic, you may find that ants have won the eating contest!

Melons

Rate your thinking and reading

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Introduction					
Growing Melons					
Kinds of Melons					
Fun with Melons					

Comprehension questions

Growing Melons

1. Which of the following do melon plants need to produce tasty melons?
 - Lots of sand
 - Lots of heat from the sun
 - Lots of leaves
2. Bees help make melons by _____.
 - bringing other insects to the melon plants
 - making honey for the honey dew melons
 - staying away from melon plants
 - pollinating the melon flowers

Kinds of Melons

3. True or false? Watermelons have a hollow center where all the seeds of the melon can be found.
 - true false
4. Why do farmers plant seedless watermelons next to seeded watermelons?
 - Because seedless watermelons do not produce enough pollen
 - Because seedless watermelons burn easily in the sun
 - Because seedless watermelons need space to grow
 - Because seedless watermelons do not produce enough leaves to grow

Fun with Melons

5. True or false? Spitting out the seeds is very important in a watermelon eating contest.
 - true false
6. Why do most Americans like to eat watermelons?

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Cover Photo: A diver welds a repair on the submerged bow of the USS Ogden at Naval Base San Diego, January 2007. Taken by Andrew McKaskie. Public domain image by the U.S. Navy.

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Getting Ready for Grade 4™

Summer Holidays



Labor Day

written by Alice Lee Folkins
& Andrew Funk

Summer Reads™ 

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Inventor of the TEXT model

Labor Day

Photo: An aviation structural mechanic fabricates metal parts aboard an aircraft carrier near the California coast, February 2009. Taken by Patrick Heil. Public domain image by the U.S. Navy.

Introduction

Many of our holidays are held on a certain day. For example, Independence Day is always on July 4th. But we also have some holidays that are held on a certain weekday of a year. Labor Day is always the first Monday in September. Last year, in 2009, we celebrated Labor Day on September 7th. This year we will celebrate Labor Day on September 6th. Labor Day celebrates the many American men, women and teenagers who work, or labor. By celebrating Labor Day on a Monday, workers can add an extra day to their weekend. Is there a better way to honor workers than to give them a day off?

Labor Day is also the last holiday in summer. By the time we celebrate Labor Day, many students have already gone back to school. Everyone has already taken their summer vacations, and it is time to get back to work. But for most of the United States, the weather is still like summer. For many people Labor Day is the last day of summer, so they spend the day having one last picnic or cookout before fall begins.

Labor Day

What is Labor Day?



The first Labor Day was held on September 5th, 1882 in New York City. It was planned by a group of workers who wanted to show everyone the different kinds of jobs and workers in New York City. They also wanted to show everyone how they made their hometown a nice place to live and work.

Photo: Historic image of child laborers at midnight at a glass and bottle factory in Indiana, August 1908. Taken by Lewis Wickes Hine. Restored by Michel Vuijlsteke. Released into the public domain by the Library of Congress.

One hundred and twenty years ago, working was very different than it is today. For one thing, most children did not spend their summer reading or playing because many worked in factories. People, both young and old, worked long hours; some as long as 12 hours each day. Many workers fell asleep at their work because they were so tired. Some workers were hurt or killed because they were too tired to be careful at their work.

Workers were upset at how badly they were being treated. They decided to form unions. A union is made up of workers in a city, or workers who do the same kind of work. For example, many teachers in your school belong to a teachers' union. As a union, workers have more power to make changes to their workplace. Unions worked with businesses to make all the changes we have today. The first Labor Day parade was to show how unions had the power to make good changes. Unions made it possible for children like you to spend your summer reading and playing.

Labor Day

Happy Labor Day



The first Labor Day celebration took place in New York City and it included a street parade that featured 10,000 workers and their families. Afterwards there was a celebration with lots of food. Leaders of some labor unions gave speeches about the goals they had reached and some that they hoped to reach. One hundred and twenty years later many cities

still have big celebrations like the first Labor Day celebration. Cities all over the United States still have lots of workers in unions. Many of the workers from those unions march in parades.

Many people celebrate Labor Day by going to see parades. But there are lots of other things that people can do, too. People can go to county fairs. Farmers, who have worked hard all summer long, show off their farm animals or vegetables in county fairs. People who do not live on farms can see lots of baby farm animals and see how farmers care for them. People can also see strange things at county fairs, such as butter sculptures. It can take many days or weeks to make butter sculptures that look like people or animals. One was a life-size butter sculpture of a cow and her calf!

There are lots of other things to do and see at county fairs. Spending Labor Day at county fairs is a great way to celebrate the work that farmers do to make sure we have good food to eat.

Labor Day

The Last Day of Summer



Labor Day is often thought of as the last day of summer. But for most parts of America, the weather is still warm, like it is still summer. Fall's chilly weather is usually another month away. So why do people think of Labor Day as the last day of summer? Because most people have been relaxing and having fun all summer long. Now it is time to get back to work.

Photo: Football players line up during a game between Louisiana State University and University of Mississippi, November 2007. Released into the public domain by JustDog at en.wikipedia.

Summer is filled with lots of wonderful things to do and see, but so is fall. People can still go to baseball games months after Labor Day. But Labor Day is the start of football season in the United States. Football fans can go and see their favorite football team play. Football players who have been practicing all summer can't wait to finally start their football season. Many football fans can't wait for Labor Day, either.

With the extra day off from work or school, many people use Labor Day to do things that they have enjoyed all summer long. They have picnics in parks, or go on one last hike. Many cities close their swimming pools after Labor Day, so some people will go for one last swim in the pool. Labor Day is sometimes the last day to enjoy the beach or the park before the weather gets chilly. So finish up your last ice cream cone or slice of watermelon. Here comes fall!

Labor Day**Rate your thinking and reading**

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	1st Read	2nd Read	3rd Read	Sharing	Smoother
Introduction					
What is Labor Day?					
Happy Labor Day					
The Last Day of Summer					

Comprehension questions**What is Labor Day?**

1. True or false? The first Labor Day celebration honored workers all over the United States.
 true false
2. Which of the following were reasons to change labor laws?
 Workers were getting hurt or killed working long hours
 Children were allowed to work in factories
 Workers were upset about the way they were treated at workplaces
 All of the above

Happy Labor Day

3. True or false? People have to live near large cities to join unions.
 true false
4. Which of the following is something you might see at a county fair?
 Baby farm animals
 Butter sculptures
 Vegetables
 All of the above

The Last Day of Summer

5. Why do people think of Labor Day as the last day of summer?

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6. True or false? People can go watch a baseball or a football game on Labor Day.
 true false