

Name _____

territories

withered

plunging

settlement

scoffed

prospector

topple

shrivel

Use the context clues in each sentence to help you decide which vocabulary word fits best in the blank.

At school Belinda learned about Nellie Cashman, a famous prospector who explored Alaska for gold. Belinda was inspired. Nellie had left her home to explore territories like Alaska and other large regions to look for gold.

“I’m going to be like Nellie Cashman,” she told her sister, Jane.

Jane just scoffed, mocking her sister. “Sure, like you’re actually going to find something! You’ll get lost out in the sun and shrivel up like a raisin!”

“I’ll find something. Just you wait and see,” said Belinda. She knew she could find minerals just like Nellie. It might not be gold she’d find, but she didn’t plan on becoming dried up and withered in the sun like Jane thought she would.

Belinda and her family lived in an area that had woods, rivers, and streams. She felt that the settlement where Nellie lived must have been almost the same. *Where would Nellie have looked?* Belinda asked herself. There was a small stream behind the house. Belinda remembered that people in Alaska found gold in streams and rivers. “I’ll look there first!”

Belinda walked along the bank of the stream. Suddenly something in the shallow water caught her eye. She had to get down there and grab it. “Maybe it’s gold!” Since the bank was steep, she walked carefully so she wouldn’t topple over. The last thing she wanted was to go plunging or diving into the cold stream.

Belinda made it to the stream and saw what was shining in the water. It was three shiny quarters sitting on the rocks and sand. Belinda swiped them up and put them in her pocket. “Well,” she said as she climbed the bank, “it’s not gold. But it’s a good start!”

Name _____

Read the selection. Complete the cause-and-effect graphic organizer.

Cause	→	Effect
	→	
	→	
	→	
	→	

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the visualize strategy to make sure you understand what you read.

Working on the Weather

12 Now, back in the days of wagon trains and gold rushes, many
24 people were leaving the Midwest to live in California. They had heard
37 the weather was beautiful the whole year. The soil never got too dry.
49 They thought they could plant crops and never worry they would die
from the heat.

52 The summer of 1849 was so hot that even now in the Midwest,
65 150 years later, it is called the Great Heat. To add to the troubles, at the
81 beginning of September, it began to rain. It rained for the next month
94 straight! The problem was that when the rain got close to the ground,
107 the heat turned it to steam.

113 The steam did cool enough to turn into fog, though. The country
125 was covered in fog. The fog was so thick that ranchers could not see
139 to give their animals water. It didn't matter, though. The animals just
151 drank the fog right out of the air! Farmers weren't so happy, however.
164 The sun couldn't get through. The seeds didn't know which way was
176 up. They grew down into the ground!

183 Febold Feboldson decided to fix things when it came to the
194 weather. He ordered some fog scissors from London. They know their
205 fog. Unfortunately, the English sent them on a slow boat. Febold didn't
217 get the scissors until Thanksgiving.

Name _____

Febold finally got to work. He cut the fog out of the air in strips. He laid them down along the roads. That way they wouldn't drown the fields. After a while, the dust covered the roads. You couldn't even tell where Febold buried the fog. Everyone was excited at the time. However, many mail carriers in the middle of the country have whispered Febold's name in anger ever since. Every spring, even today, when it rains or thaws, the fog comes leaking out of the ground. It turns country roads into rivers of mud!



There's also another problem here in the Midwest. Sometimes there is just not enough rain. The next year, in 1850, there was a terrible drought. The sun shone for weeks. There were no clouds to cover the people in Nebraska.

Febold was annoyed, because he loved fishing. It was too sunny and hot to sit and wait for the fish to bite. So he decided to make some rain fall.

He collected all the wood and dry grass he could find. Then he went from lake to lake. He was building the biggest bonfires you've ever seen. He thought if he could get the fires really hot, they'd make the water in the lakes evaporate and form clouds. Soon there were many clouds in the sky from all the water rising out of the lakes. They bumped into each other and the rain began to fall!

Once Febold started the rain, it rained regularly again. The only problem was that the people on the plains had nowhere to swim, since there was no water in the lakes!

Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

Possible responses provided.

1. What happened when the rain got close to the ground during the Great Heat?

The rain turned into fog.

2. Why did the seeds grow down into the ground?

The fog was so thick that the sun couldn't get through. So, the seeds didn't know which way was up.

3. According to the third paragraph on the second page of the passage, what caused Febold to try to make some rain fall?

There were no clouds and it was too sunny and hot to wait for the fish to bite.

4. What was one effect of Febold making rain?

People had nowhere to swim since there was no water in the lakes.

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to intonation and phrasing. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

Name _____

The Mighty John Henry

When Americans started moving west, the country needed a railroad for faster travel. John Henry worked to help build that railroad. He was the strongest man to ever live.

The railroad needed to pass through Big Bend Mountain, and the boss wanted to use a powered drill to get through the rock. But that drill would put John Henry out of work! So John Henry challenged the mechanical drill to a digging competition. With two twenty-pound hammers in each hand, John Henry dug 15 feet in 35 minutes. He beat the machine and saved the day!

Answer the questions about the text.

1. How can you tell this is a tall tale?

It includes hyperbole and a larger-than-life hero.

2. What is one example of hyperbole in the text?

Possible response: John Henry could use two twenty-pound hammers in each hand.

3. In what way is John Henry a larger-than-life hero?

Possible response: He is stronger than any man but also proves he is stronger than a machine.

4. Why does the author include details about how far John Henry and the machine dug?

Possible response: The details show that John Henry could dig faster than a machine and that he wanted to prove he's better than a machine.

Name _____

Read each sentence below. Underline the context clues that help you understand the meaning of each homograph in bold. Then write the correct definition of the homograph on the line.

1. Now, back in the days of wagon trains and gold rushes, many people were leaving the Midwest to **live** in California.

make a home in a place

2. To add to the troubles, at the beginning of **fall**, it began to rain.

season of autumn

3. The problem was that when the rain got **close** to the ground, the heat turned it to steam.

a short distance away

4. They grew down into the **ground**!

Earth's solid surface

5. He was **building** the biggest bonfires you've ever seen.

to put parts and material together; construct

Name _____

A. Read the words below. Use a slanted line (/) to divide each word into its syllables. On the line, write whether the first syllable is “open” or “closed.”

- 1. pre/vent open
- 2. fa/mous open
- 3. rib/oon closed
- 4. book/nd closed
- 5. ci/der open
- 6. va/cancy open

B. Draw a line to match each singular noun with its correct plural rule. Then write the plural form of the noun on the line.

- | | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. hoof | change middle vowels | <u>hooves</u> |
| 2. woman | change middle vowels and consonant | <u>women</u> |
| 3. tooth | make no change | <u>teeth</u> |
| 4. mouse | change ending to -ves | <u>mice</u> |
| 5. deer | change ending to -en | <u>deer</u> |

Name _____

Evidence is details and examples from a text that support a writer’s opinion. The student who wrote the paragraph below cited evidence that shows how well the author uses exaggeration to develop the main character.

Topic sentence	→	In “Working on the Weather,” the author does a good job of using exaggeration to show that Febold Feboldson is always trying to fix the weather.
Evidence	→	The author uses exaggeration to describe Febold’s actions when he cuts the fog into strips and then buries it on the roads. But there was a problem. In the spring, the fog came to the surface and turned the roads to rivers of mud.
Concluding statement	→	I think the author’s use of exaggeration made Febold a funny character. Every time he tried to fix the weather, he made something else worse.

Write a paragraph about a tall tale you have chosen. Cite evidence from the text to show how well an author uses exaggeration to develop the main character. Remember to use reasons and evidence to support your opinion and to use articles correctly.

Write a topic sentence: _____

Cite evidence from the text: **Answers will vary but should discuss the author’s use of exaggeration to develop the main character of a tall tale and include a topic sentence, evidence from the text, and a concluding statement. Answers should also use any articles correctly.**

End with a concluding statement: _____

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A. Read the draft model. Use the questions that follow the draft to help you think about what sentence types you can use.

Draft Model

Tall tales teach about life. Tall tales entertain. My grandmother tells me tall tales. I think tall tales are clever and fun to read, and I love tall tales.

1. How could you combine the first two sentences to make one longer sentence?
2. How could you rewrite the third sentence to provide more detail?
3. How could you rewrite the last sentence as two sentences to strengthen the narrator’s final point?

B. Now revise the draft by using different types of sentences to make it more interesting to read.

Answers will vary but should include different sentence types,

including both long and short sentences.