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## Introduction

Organized by specific reading skills, this book is designed to enhance students’ reading comprehension. The engaging topics provide meaningful and focused practice. The reading passages are presented in a variety of genres, including fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Subject matter from across the curriculum, including topics from science, history, and literary classics, deepens student knowledge while strengthening reading skills.

The grade-appropriate selections in this series are an asset to any reading program. Various reading skills and concepts are reinforced throughout the book through activities that align to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts. To view these standards, please see the Common Core Alignment Chart on page 4.

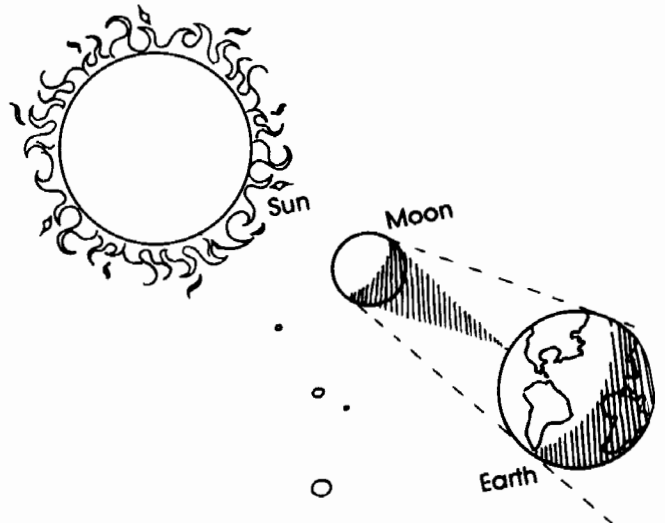
Read the passage. Then, answer the questions.

## A Solar Eclipse

Have you ever seen an eclipse of the sun? It is called a solar eclipse. **Solar** means sun. A solar eclipse happens when the sun's light is blocked from Earth. Do you know why this happens?


The moon travels around Earth. Earth and the moon both travel around the sun. Sometimes, the moon passes exactly between the sun and Earth. The sun's light is blocked by the moon. Earth becomes dark. This darkness can last from two to seven minutes. Then, as the moon moves, the sunlight appears again. A solar eclipse is an amazing event.

- Kim is writing a report on solar eclipses. Which sentence would best help her summarize what a solar eclipse is?
  - Have you ever seen an eclipse of the sun?
  - A solar eclipse happens when the sun's light is blocked from Earth.
  - The moon travels around Earth.
  - Then, as the moon moves, the sunlight appears again.
- The word **solar** means \_\_\_\_\_.
  - moon
  - blocked
  - eclipse
  - of the sun
- Which of the following statements about a solar eclipse is not true?
  - The darkness of an eclipse lasts a day.
  - The sunlight appears again when the moon moves.
  - Sometimes the moon passes exactly between the sun and the Earth.
  - Earth and the moon both travel around the sun.




Read the letter. Then, complete the activities.

## Breakfast of Winners


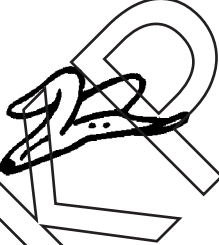


"Why Crunchy Munchy Bunches of  
Bananas and Bran Flakes Is My  
Favorite Cereal" Contest



Dear Cereal Maker,

I try to eat your delicious cereal every day. It is my first choice for breakfast (except for cold pepperoni pizza, but Mom says I can only eat that on my birthday). Why do I like your cereal so much? First of all, Mom always says that I act like a monkey when I climb all over the furniture, and we all know that monkeys love bananas. Second, my big brother constantly tells me not to act so flaky! And, your cereal has lots of big flakes. Anyway, I guess liking your cereal is just in my genes!

Your friend,  
Hayden

1. Write an **X** in front of the best summary of this letter.

\_\_\_\_\_ A child has entered a contest to see which person has the best reasons for eating a particular brand of cereal. He feels that his behaving like a monkey and acting flaky should make him the winner.

\_\_\_\_\_ A child has entered a contest to see which contestant eats the most of a particular kind of cereal. He feels that *Crunchy Munchy Bunches of Bananas* and *Bran Flakes* has the best combination of fruit and bran flakes.

2. Summarize the letter in your own words.

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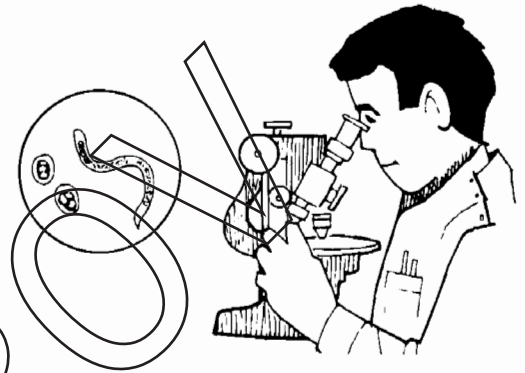
Read the passage. Then, answer the questions.

## A Microscope

Have you ever looked into a microscope? A microscope is an instrument that helps us see very small things by magnifying them. This means that they appear much larger than they really are. Scientists and doctors can use microscopes to study parts of the body, such as blood and skin cells. They can also study germs, tiny plants, and tiny animals.

A microscope works much like a magnifying glass. But, while a magnifying glass has only one lens, a microscope has two sets of lenses. They are called the objective lens and the ocular lens.

Through the years, people used glass lenses to help them see many small things. But in 1590, a Dutchman discovered how to use two lenses to magnify things and invented the first true microscope.



1. A microscope helps us see small things by \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. magnifying them
- B. making them smaller
- C. reflecting them
- D. putting them on glass

2. Briefly describe some of the uses of a microscope.

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3. What is the main difference in microscopes before 1590 and after 1590?

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4. From this passage, we can conclude that the microscope \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. has only one lens
- B. was not necessary
- C. is the same as a magnifying glass
- D. is a useful instrument

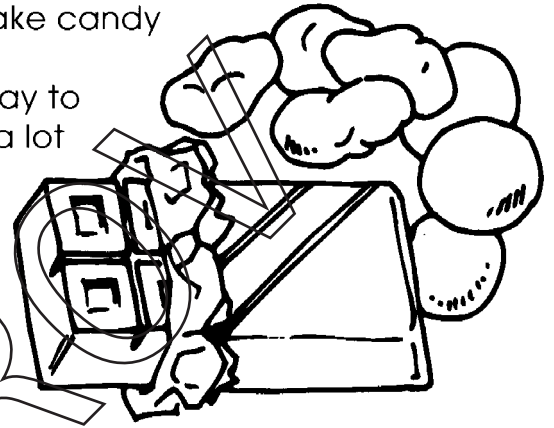
Read the passage. Then, answer the questions.

## A Brief History of Chocolate

Before the 1900s, most Americans had never tasted chocolate. In ancient times, as early as 1000 BC, people enjoyed chocolate in a drink. It was made from cocoa beans and bitter spices. Later, people learned to add sugar to make the drink sweeter. In 1828, a Dutch chemist found a way to make the fine powder we know as cocoa. Soon, candy makers began to find ways to make candy from cocoa.

In 1875, Daniel Peter and Henri Nestlé found a way to produce milk chocolate. Making milk chocolate took a lot of work and was very expensive. It also took a lot of time.

In the early 1900s, Milton S. Hershey found a way to **mass produce** milk chocolate, or make large amounts of it, in his factory in Hershey, Pennsylvania. He sold his chocolate bars for five cents each. This was the first time most people could afford to eat and enjoy chocolate.



1. Why do you think that most children did not get to eat milk chocolate before the early 1900s?
2. Do you think the milk chocolate made by Peter and Nestlé was expensive or inexpensive? Why?
3. What do you think **mass produce** means?
4. What was the first chocolate drink made from?

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Read the passage. Then, answer the questions. Highlight evidence from the text to support your answers.

## It Is That Time

Sally and Norman are swaying slowly in the family swing. The air is crisp. Sally puts her arm around Norman and snuggles into his shaggy body. Norman's tongue licks her hand that lies on her blue-jeaned leg. They watch a sluggish ladybug crawl underneath a pile of old, brown leaves. One red leaf drifts to the top of the ladybug's leaf pile. Norman's graying ears prick up as a southbound V of geese honks good-bye. The sky slowly turns from blue, to pink, to purple, to black.

The first star shines as Sally's mom calls them in to eat. Sally gives a last push as she slides out of the swing. She walks to the back door of the house. Norman leaps down. He barks once at a rabbit, then lopes after Sally. She smiles and rubs Norman's head as they walk into the warm house together.

1. What time of year is it? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What time of the day is it? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What meal is Sally's family going to eat? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Where could this occur? \_\_\_\_\_  
What made you choose this location? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How does Sally feel? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Who is Norman? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Draw a picture of Norman.

