

# INTRODUCTION

*Wonder Stories* is a series of books designed to improve the reading comprehension of older students whose reading skills are below grade level. The series is also ideal for challenging the abilities of younger students functioning at or above grade level.

Each factual article begins with a question about a topic that has prompted thoughts like, "I wonder how, I wonder why, I wonder what. . ." Comprehension questions following each story address the following skills: main idea, finding a fact, locating an answer, inference, vocabulary, and word analysis.

The high-interest stories appeal to all ages, making it possible to tailor the appropriate book for individual students depending upon their reading abilities. In order to ensure that stories were at the desired reading levels, readability scales were used.\*

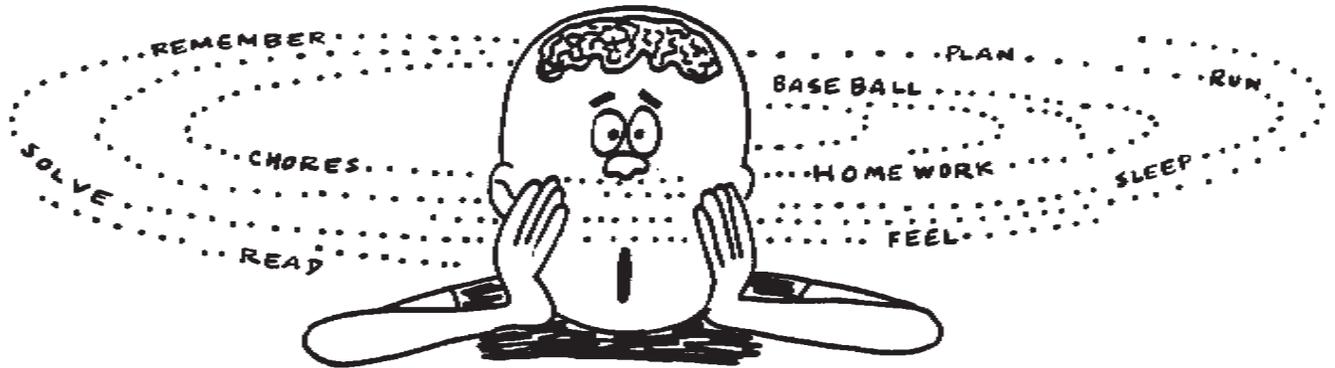
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### A Note About Readability Scores

Readability scales are useful as long as one realizes their limitations. Results are approximate guidelines only, with a minimum margin of error of (+ or -) a grade level. In other words, a story measured at a second grade readability level could easily be suitable for both first and third graders. Another limitation is that two different readability scales can be applied to the same sample, yet yield widely varied results. In spite of the inexact nature of readability scales, we at Remedia use them because they measure word and sentence length, both valid predictors of readability. They also help us provide vocabulary-controlled materials in order to meet the special education needs of many of our valued clients. At the same time, we realize that these scales are not designed to measure every other factor affecting readability, such as sentence structure or appeal to the reader. We are also aware of the variance in standards and expectations set for each grade level. What is first grade material in one school may be second grade in another. At Remedia we strive to take all these factors into consideration as we develop and revise materials. We leave the rest in your capable hands. Regarding readability, you—and your students—will be the final judge.

# What does your brain do?



Your brain is the best and brightest computer that was ever made. Some computers are faster at solving problems. No man-made machine, however, has ever been able to perform all the jobs your brain does each day.

The biggest part of your brain is the thinking part. It is called the “cerebrum.” The cerebrum looks like a big, grey lump of clay with a lot of wrinkles. It helps you figure out the answers to problems. It also stores millions of bits of information. Perhaps you want to recall what you did yesterday. A quick “trip” to your cerebrum finds the information and brings it to your mind.

Your brain does many tasks in addition to thinking. It controls your heartbeat. It reminds you to breathe. It sends and receives messages to and from all parts of your body.

If your hand passes over a pot of boiling water, your brain receives a message that says, “hot.” This happens before your finger feels any pain. Because of your brain, you stay awake during the day and asleep at night. No one has yet discovered all the things that the human brain can do.

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1. This story is about the part inside your head called the \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. What is the cerebrum? \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Which paragraph compares the brain to a computer? \_\_\_\_\_
  4. How do you think a human brain is different from an animal brain?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  5. What word in paragraph two means “remember”? \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Write other forms of these words that are used in the story:  
inform: \_\_\_\_\_      boil: \_\_\_\_\_  
breath: \_\_\_\_\_      bright: \_\_\_\_\_