

Comprehension Homework Packets

36 Take-Home Packets That Include Short Passages,
Graphic Organizers With Questions, and Practice Tests

JAN MEYER

Scholastic Inc. grants teachers permission to photocopy the designated reproducible pages from this book for classroom use. No other part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission of the publisher. For information regarding permission, write to Scholastic Inc., 557 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Editor: Mela Ottaiano

Cover design by Maria Lilja

Interior design by Melinda Belter

Interior photos/illustrations: pages 4, 13, and 22: North Wind Picture Archives; page 7: Courtesy of Independence National Historical Park via SODA; pages 10, 28, 34, and 58: Scholastic Photo Archive; page 16: Mona Mark; pages 19, 25, 31, 46, and 55: Library of Congress; page 37: Bettmann/CORBIS; pages 40 and 49: The Granger Collection, New York; page 43: "The Last Spike: May 10, 1869 Union Pacific Railroad, Promontory Point, Utah" Thomas Hill (1829–1908 American)/Scholastic Photo Archive; page 52: Digital Vision/Getty Images; page 61: Sal Veder/AP Photo; page 64: Dorothea Lange/Library of Congress (LC-DIG-fsa-8b32396); page 67: Corbis; page 70: Montgomery County Sheriff's office/AP Photo; page 73: by NASA via SODA; pages 76, 103, and 106: Margeaux Lucas; pages 79, 85, 91, 97, 100, and 109: David Diaz; page 82: Tony Link Design/iStockphoto; page 88: Teresa Southwell; page 94: Teresa Southwell

"Rosie the Riveter" adapted from *Scholastic Action*, © 2005, Scholastic Inc. Used by permission.

ISBN-13: 978-0-439-65094-6

ISBN-10: 0-439-65094-1

Copyright © 2007 by Jan Meyer.

All rights reserved. Published by Scholastic Inc.

Printed in the U.S.A.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

40

15 14 13 12 11 10 09 08 07

NEW YORK • TORONTO • LONDON • AUCKLAND • SYDNEY
MEXICO CITY • NEW DELHI • HONG KONG • BUENOS AIRES

**Teaching
Resources**

CONTENTS

Introduction 3

Nonfiction (American History)

The Lost Colony	4
Benjamin Franklin	7
The Boston Tea Party	10
Sequoyah	13
The Lewis and Clark Expedition	16
Sojourner Truth	19
The Burning of the White House	22
Susan B. Anthony	25
Elizabeth Blackwell	28
The Underground Railroad	31
George Washington Carver	34
Women of the Civil War	37
Laura Ingalls Wilder	40
The Transcontinental Railroad	43
The Wright Brothers	46
Eleanor Roosevelt	49
The Statue of Liberty	52
Babe Ruth	55
Walt Disney	58
Cesar Chavez	61
The Dust Bowl	64
Rosie the Riveter	67
The Montgomery Bus Boycott	70
The <i>Apollo 11</i> Moon Landing	73

Fiction (Greek Myths)

Arachne	76
Atalanta	79
Bellerophon	82
Daedalus and Icarus	85
Demeter and Persephone	88
Echo and Narcissus	91
Io	94
Odysseus and Polyphemus	97
Orpheus and Eurydice	100
Perseus and Medusa	103
Phaeton	106
The Wooden Horse	109

Answer Key 112

INTRODUCTION

Many students can read words, but they often need help in developing their ability to understand what they read. This book provides practice in building this important skill, which is so necessary for school success. As students read these passages and then work on the companion reading comprehension exercises, they will learn to read for meaning and will gain experience in:

- Building critical-thinking skills
- Becoming purposeful and thoughtful readers
- Remembering key information and paying attention to detail
- Identifying main ideas
- Recognizing cause-and-effect relationships
- Analyzing personality traits, actions, and motivations
- Making inferences and drawing conclusions
- Recalling sequence of events
- Determining the meanings of words in context

THE PASSAGES

This book is divided into two sections: Nonfiction and Fiction. The nonfiction passages focus on important and memorable events in American history from the sixteenth through the twentieth centuries. This section also includes mini-biographies that highlight men and women known for their outstanding achievements and significant contributions in a wide variety of fields.

The fiction selections are all Greek myths. Greek myths have a special appeal for children. These timeless tales are often filled with magic, adventurous deeds, suspense, and emotion. Their characters—gods and goddesses, kings and queens, vulnerable youths, brave heroes, and horrible monsters—are strong and memorable. They'll also read myths about why we hear echoes, why flowers bloom in the spring, and other natural phenomena.

THE READING COMPREHENSION EXERCISES

Following each passage are two reading comprehension exercises that test understanding and retention of what has been read. Students

can complete one or both of these exercises, using recall and by scanning the passage to find or verify their answers.

In the Comprehension Check, multiple choice questions in the bubble test format ask the types of questions found in the reading comprehension sections on most statewide and national standardized tests. Completing these tests will help students gain practice and build confidence in their test-taking skills and strategies. Encourage students to read each question carefully to ensure that they understand what is being asked and to consider each answer before making their choice.

Each of the Comprehension Boosters includes a graphic organizer activity and short answer questions that extend and expand learning. The engaging graphic organizer activities help students create a visual representation based on their reading. They will construct a chronology, write headlines, create illustrations, make a timeline, draw a pictorial map, complete a conflict/resolution chart and a belief/supporting evidence chart, and develop an attention-getting flyer. Included as well are the following:

- Venn diagrams for comparing and contrasting
- Sequencing activities for understanding order of events
- Cause-and-effect maps for focusing on relationships and consequences
- A five W's chart that identifies who, what, when, where, and why
- A story map for identifying key elements

Encourage students to use their own words and ideas in completing these activities and the short-answer questions.

At the end of each Comprehension Booster is an optional creative writing prompt—The Write Stuff—related to the passage that students have just read. Many of these springboards to writing are subjects that will give students opportunities to stretch their imaginations and draw upon their own experiences. Others ask students to interpret a famous quote, write a report based on research on the Internet or in a reference book, create a menu of healthy foods, and list ways that weather can harm or help the environment.

The Lost Colony

In 1584 Sir Walter Raleigh, a favored adviser to Queen Elizabeth I, sent an expedition of explorers to America. He hoped they would find a suitable place where England could establish a colony. The men returned with glowing stories about Roanoke, a small island off the coast of our present-day state of North Carolina. They reported that the Native Americans who lived in the area were welcoming, fish were **abundant**, and the soil was so fruitful that the peas they had planted had grown 14 inches in just ten days.



Encouraged by this enthusiastic account, Raleigh recruited about a hundred men to colonize Roanoke Island. By August 1585 these men had crossed the Atlantic Ocean and were building houses and a fort on the island. At first everything went well, but then problems developed. Food became scarce, the promised British supply ships didn't arrive, and the relationship between the colonists and the Native Americans soured. In June 1586 Sir Francis Drake anchored near the island on his way home from the West Indies. Fed up with life in the New World, the colonists sailed back to England with Drake on his ships.

Unwilling to give up, Raleigh made arrangements for another colonizing attempt. This time he included families. They would be more likely, he reasoned, to develop the colony into a permanent settlement. Raleigh chose John White, a member of the first colony, to be the governor. To all who were willing to join the expedition, he offered 500 acres of land.

In July 1587 about 115 men, women, and children arrived on Roanoke. Included in the group were White's pregnant daughter, Eleanor Dare, and her husband, Ananias. The colonists found that the original settlers' fort had been **razed** and the houses had become overgrown with vines. Under White's direction, the settlement was soon rebuilt. There, on August 18, 1587, Eleanor Dare gave birth to a daughter, Virginia, the first English child born in the "New World." Later that month, White sailed back to England to get needed supplies.

A war between England and Spain prevented White from returning to Roanoke until August 1590. When he finally reached the island, however, he found that all the houses had been removed and the settlement had been abandoned. The only clues to the colonists' whereabouts were the letters CRO carved on one tree and the word CROATOAN carved on another. Croatoan, an island south of Roanoke, was where the Croatoan Indians lived. The next day White tried to sail to this island, but fierce storms and rough seas made landing there impossible. White had no choice but to return to England.

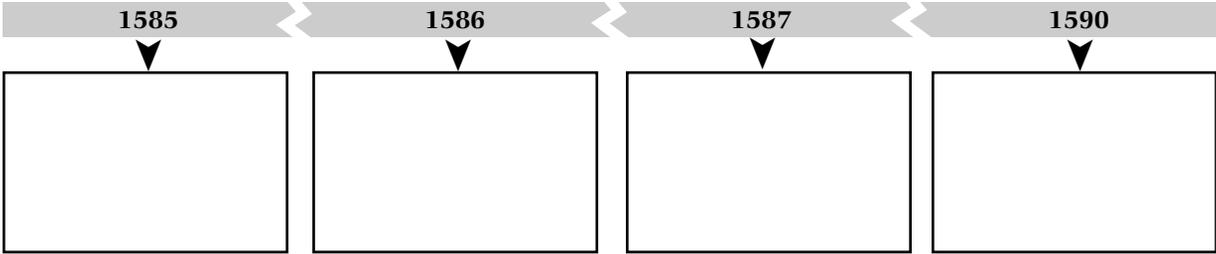
In the years that followed, several attempts were made to find the colonists. None were successful. The fate of the lost colonists remains an unsolved mystery.



- 1. In the first paragraph, it says that “fish were abundant.” Which of these is the best antonym for *abundant*?**
 - A. tame
 - B. delicious
 - C. scarce
 - D. huge
- 2. Which of these is a problem that developed for the first colonists at Roanoke?**
 - A. The supplies that were supposed to be sent from England didn't arrive.
 - B. Their relationship with the Native Americans was no longer friendly.
 - C. Food became hard to find.
 - D. all of the above
- 3. On whose ships did the first colonists return to England?**
 - A. Sir Francis Drake's
 - B. Ananias Dare's
 - C. Sir Walter Raleigh's
 - D. Governor John White's
- 4. In paragraph four, it says that the “original settlers' fort had been razed.” Which of these is the best synonym for *razed*?**
 - A. enlarged
 - B. destroyed
 - C. decorated
 - D. cleaned
- 5. Virginia Dare is often mentioned in American history books. She is remembered because**
 - A. she was the daughter of Governor John White.
 - B. she was the first English woman to live in America.
 - C. she was the only member of the second colony who was found.
 - D. she was the first English child born in America.
- 6. Why did John White sail back to England in August 1587?**
 - A. He was fed up with life in America.
 - B. He couldn't find the colonists.
 - C. He needed to get supplies for the colony.
 - D. He had to give a report on the settlement to Sir Walter Raleigh.
- 7. Which of these states an OPINION about the second colony on Roanoke Island?**
 - A. The colonists included women and children.
 - B. The colonists abandoned the settlement to find a place where there was more food.
 - C. When they arrived on Roanoke, the colonists had to rebuild the settlement.
 - D. The colonists were offered 500 acres of land by Sir Walter Raleigh.
- 8. The second settlement on Roanoke Island is called the Lost Colony because**
 - A. no one knows where Roanoke Island is.
 - B. the colonists got lost on their way to the island.
 - C. no one knows what happened to the colonists who established this settlement.
 - D. there is no one living on Roanoke Island now.

 **COMPREHENSION BOOSTER** 

1. Complete this timeline for Roanoke Island by briefly describing something that happened there in the years 1585, 1586, 1587, and 1590.



2. What evidence did the explorers provide in their report to show that the land on Roanoke was fruitful?

3. Why did Sir Walter Raleigh think families would be good colonists?

4. Why was John White delayed for so long in returning to the second colony?

5. How do you think White felt when he sailed back to England in 1587?

Why did he feel this way? _____

6. Over the years many historians have speculated on what happened to the colonists of the second settlement on Roanoke Island. What do you think *speculate* means? Take a good guess, then look it up in the dictionary to see if you're right.

My guess: _____

The dictionary definition in my own words: _____

The Write Stuff

What do you think happened to the lost colonists of Roanoke? Why do you think they were never found? Do you think they all left Roanoke at the same time? Why do you think they carved the word CROATOAN on a tree? Use your imagination and write your ideas in your journal or on a separate sheet of paper.

Benjamin Franklin

Benjamin Franklin was born on January 17, 1706, in a four-room house on Milk Street in Boston. He was the fifteenth child of his father, Josiah, a maker and seller of soaps and candles. After he had attended school for just two years, 10-year-old Benjamin went to work in his father's shop. In his free time he liked to read, fish, go rowing, and swim. Inventive at an early age, he tried floating in a large pond while holding a stick attached to the string of a kite. On windy days, the kite pulled him quickly and smoothly through the water.



When he was 12, Benjamin became an **apprentice** to his brother James, who was a printer. He signed a contract in which he agreed to work without pay for eight years. In return, James agreed to provide him with a room, food, and training as a printer. Benjamin quickly mastered setting type and operating the heavy wooden printing press. At night after work and very early in the morning, he eagerly read book after book on a wide range of subjects.

In 1721 James started a newspaper called the *New England Courant*. The paper was a single sheet, printed on both sides, which included humorous letters to the editor written by James and his friends. To hide their identities, they signed their letters with **fictitious** names like Ichabod Henroost, Harry Meanwell, and Tabitha Talkative. Benjamin wanted to write for the *Courant*, too. One night he slipped a letter signed "Silence Dogood" under the door of the print shop. To his joy it was printed. He wrote 13 more of these letters in which he made fun of such things as drunkenness and women's hoop petticoats. By 1723, 17-year-old Benjamin was fed up with serving his brother who was often harsh and critical. Without a word to anyone, he ran off to Philadelphia where he found a room to rent and a paying job with a printer.

Just six years later, Benjamin owned his own print shop and newspaper, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. Both were soon very successful. In 1733 he launched his *Poor Richard's Almanack*, a yearly publication that included weather predictions, verses, helpful information, and wise sayings. Most of these sayings expressed basic truths ("Lost time is never found again") or were meant to advise ("Be slow to choose a friend, slower in changing"). Before long, his cleverly written almanac was one of the most popular publications in the American colonies.

By the time he was 42, Franklin was a wealthy man. He retired from his printing business, but continued to lead a full and productive life. Fascinated by science, he conducted experiments with electricity. He invented a musical instrument, signed the Declaration of Independence, and persuaded the French to aid America in the Revolutionary War. Still politically active at 81, he helped shape the new nation's Constitution. Printer, writer, scientist, inventor, statesman—this man, who accomplished so much, is one of the most important figures in America's history.



1. Which of these do you think was most likely one of Benjamin's tasks when he worked in his father's shop?
 - A. setting type
 - B. trimming wicks for the candles
 - C. selling newspapers to the customers
 - D. making and selling kites

2. An **apprentice** is someone who
 - A. makes predictions about the weather.
 - B. writes humorous letters to the editor.
 - C. works for little or no pay in exchange for training in a trade or craft.
 - D. experiments with electricity.

3. What was the name of the newspaper that was owned by James Franklin?
 - A. *Poor Richard's Almanack*
 - B. *The Pennsylvania Gazette*
 - C. *the New England Courant*
 - D. *the Boston News-Letter*

4. In paragraph three, it says that James and his friends signed their letters to the editor with **fictitious** names. Which of these is the best synonym for **fictitious**?
 - A. well-known
 - B. made-up
 - C. important
 - D. complicated

5. Why did Benjamin leave Boston in 1723?
 - A. He wanted more free time to read books.
 - B. He wanted to be a scientist.
 - C. He had completed the agreed-to period of time as his brother's apprentice.
 - D. He was tired of working for his strict brother.

6. One of the sayings in *Poor Richard's Almanack* was, "The sleeping fox catches no poultry." This saying advises against being
 - A. lazy.
 - B. hungry.
 - C. cowardly.
 - D. greedy.

7. "Lost _____ is never found again." Which of these words correctly completes this wise saying, which is quoted in this biography?
 - A. patience
 - B. courage
 - C. confidence
 - D. time

8. Which of these sentences states an **OPINION** about Benjamin Franklin?
 - A. He invented a musical instrument.
 - B. When he was 12, he became an apprentice to his brother James.
 - C. After he retired, he led a full and productive life.
 - D. He was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.



1. In the chart below, compare and contrast yourself with Benjamin Franklin when he was a boy.

	Benjamin Franklin	Myself
Date of birth		
Free-time interests and activities		
Descriptive adjective (and the reason you chose it)		

2. Josiah Franklin had a good business. Why do you think that people at that time needed so many candles?

3. What information is given in this biography that lets you know that Benjamin was part of a large family?

4. Benjamin attended school for only two years, but by the time he was 17 he was well-informed on a number of subjects. How did he acquire this knowledge?

5. Benjamin used the pen name "Silence Dogood" to hide his identity. Write down a pen name that you would use for yourself.

6. What did Franklin do that helped the colonies in their war against the British?

The Write Stuff

In 1771 Franklin began writing his autobiography. Of his second year of school he wrote, "I acquired fair writing, but I failed in the arithmetic and made no progress in it." In your journal or on a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph that you would include if you were writing your autobiography.