

# 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.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## What is a genius?



A person may be bright and talented. We might say that person is a genius. That means he or she has knowledge far beyond the average human being.

It is hard to say how someone gets this kind of knowledge. Some people seem to be born with a strong ability to quickly grasp facts. Others don't show this trait until they are teens or even adults.

Albert Einstein is said to be one of the smartest men who ever lived. Yet he didn't speak until he was two years old. His parents worried that something was wrong with him. As a schoolboy, he did not earn good grades. As an adult, he wrote many ideas, called theories, about science. Some of his thoughts are so deep that only a few people can truly understand them.

Wolfgang Mozart is also said to have been a genius. At the age of three, he showed amazing musical talent. He began composing music when he was five years old. Although he was thought of as a genius, he died a poor man.

A genius may need special training. For example, he or she might be smart in school but not have good manners. Perhaps the most important thing is to be a "well-rounded" person.

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1. This story is about \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Who were two geniuses?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which paragraph talks about someone with special musical talent? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What do you think "well-rounded" means? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What word in paragraph 3 means "ideas about science"? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Write other forms of these words that are used in the story.

know: \_\_\_\_\_

smart: \_\_\_\_\_