

Reading Passages

Grade 3

Free sample: 2 of 24 passages, with answer key



What you are looking at

Two complete passages from the Grade 3 pack: one story and one true-fact article. Each has a Words to know box, four multiple-choice questions and one written response. The answer key is at the end.

How it was made

Written with AI assistance; checked by automated tools for accuracy and readability. A program estimated the reading level (Flesch-Kincaid), a program checked the answers against the text, and the facts in the true-fact article were compared with public sources by automated tools. Mistakes are possible, so please tell us about any you find.

The full pack

24 passages (12 stories and 12 true-fact articles), student pages, answer key, how-to-use guide, in Letter and A4. Estimated Flesch-Kincaid grade levels 2.7 to 3.7. This sample shows passages 1 and 8. Find the full pack at quietcog.quietcog.workers.dev/reading-passages/grade-3.

The Tuesday Soup

Every Tuesday, Grandpa Eli made soup in a pot so big that Mateo
13 needed both arms to carry the lid. The soup always started the same
26 way, with water, salt, and one onion. After that, it was up to the
40 **neighbors**.

41 At five o'clock, the knocking began. Mrs. Okafor brought a bag of
53 sweet potatoes. The twins from upstairs brought carrots with their
63 little green tops still on. Mr. Lin carried in a jar of dried mushrooms.
77 Someone always came with beans. Nobody ever agreed on how the
88 soup should taste, and nobody ever seemed to mind.

97 Mateo's job was to stir. He stood on a wooden **stool** and stirred with a
112 spoon as long as a baseball bat. Each week the kitchen smelled
124 different. One week it smelled like a garden. Another week it smelled
136 like a campfire.

139 One Tuesday, the door stayed quiet. Five o'clock came and went.
150 Mateo kept stirring water and one **lonely** onion.

158 "Maybe everyone forgot," he said.

163 Grandpa Eli only smiled. He opened the window. Voices floated up
174 from the yard. Then came a thump on the stairs, a rattle, and a laugh.
189 The whole building was arriving at once, with bowls and bags and one
202 huge **squash** that the twins were rolling up the steps.

212 Mateo picked up the long spoon. "Okay," he said. "Who brought the
224 beans?"

Words to know

neighbors people who live near you

lonely all alone

stool a small seat with no back

squash a large vegetable with a thick skin

Timed read

Words in 1 minute _____

Mistakes _____

Words correct _____

The Tuesday Soup

Name _____

Date _____

1. What did Grandpa Eli always put in the pot first?

- ☐ (A) Beans and carrots
- ☐ (B) Sweet potatoes and mushrooms
- ☐ (C) Only water
- ☐ (D) Water, salt, and one onion

2. What is this story mostly about?

- ☐ (A) Neighbors who share a pot of soup each Tuesday
- ☐ (B) A boy who dislikes onions
- ☐ (C) A cook who forgets a recipe
- ☐ (D) A family that moves to a new town

3. Read this sentence: “After that, it was up to the neighbors.” What does the word neighbors mean?

- ☐ (A) Cooks who work in a restaurant
- ☐ (B) Friends who live far away
- ☐ (C) People who live near you
- ☐ (D) Members of your own family

4. Why did Grandpa Eli only smile when Mateo said, “Maybe everyone forgot”?

- ☐ (A) He was not hungry
- ☐ (B) He did not like the neighbors
- ☐ (C) He had a feeling the neighbors were on their way
- ☐ (D) He wanted to stop making soup

5. At the end, Mateo says, “Who brought the beans?” How do you think he is feeling now, compared with how he felt earlier? Use details from the story.

What Is in a Camel's Hump?

Many people believe a camel's hump is full of water. It is a fun idea,
15 but it is not true. A camel's hump is full of fat.

27 The fat is like a **pantry** of food. In the desert, plants can be hard to
43 find. When a camel cannot find enough to eat, its body uses the fat in
58 the hump for **energy**. As the fat gets used up, the hump gets **floppy**.
72 It may even lean over to one side.

80 So how does a camel get by without much water? A camel can go a
95 week or more without a drink. When it finally does find water, it can
109 drink a huge amount. One camel can drink up to thirty-two gallons in a
123 single visit!

125 There are two kinds of camels. A **dromedary** camel has one hump. A
138 Bactrian camel has two. There is an easy trick for remembering which
150 is which. Turn a capital D on its side. It looks like one hump. Turn a
166 capital B on its side. It looks like two humps. D is for **dromedary**, and
181 B is for Bactrian.

185 Camels live in dry places where water and plants are hard to find.
198 Their bodies are built for that kind of life, and the hump is only one
213 part of the story. But now you know what is really inside!

Words to know

pantry a place where food is stored

dromedary a camel with one hump

energy the power a body needs to move
and grow

floppy soft and drooping

Timed read

Words in 1 minute _____

Mistakes _____

Words correct _____

What Is in a Camel's Hump?

Name _____

Date _____

1. What is inside a camel's hump?

- ☐ (A) Fat
- ☐ (B) Water
- ☐ (C) Sand
- ☐ (D) Bones

2. What is the main idea of this passage?

- ☐ (A) Camels cannot live in the desert
- ☐ (B) Camels drink water only once a year
- ☐ (C) Dromedary camels are larger than Bactrian camels
- ☐ (D) A camel's hump is full of fat, not water, and the camel can use that fat for energy

3. The writer says the fat is "like a pantry of food." What does this comparison help you understand?

- ☐ (A) A camel's hump holds food energy for later
- ☐ (B) Camels live in kitchens
- ☐ (C) Camels do not need to eat
- ☐ (D) The hump is made of wood

4. What can you tell about a camel with a floppy hump?

- ☐ (A) It has just had a big drink of water
- ☐ (B) It has not had enough to eat lately
- ☐ (C) It is a Bactrian camel
- ☐ (D) It is about to have a baby

5. Explain the trick the writer gives for telling a dromedary camel from a Bactrian camel.

Answer key

1. The Tuesday Soup

Story · 225 words

1. D (Literal) Water, salt, and one onion

Evidence: “with water, salt, and one onion”

2. A (Main idea) Neighbors who share a pot of soup each Tuesday

Question: What is this story mostly about?

3. C (Vocabulary) People who live near you

Evidence: “After that, it was up to the neighbors.”

4. C (Inference) He had a feeling the neighbors were on their way

Evidence: “Grandpa Eli only smiled. He opened the window. Voices floated up from the yard.”

5. Written response

Sample answer: He is happy and relieved. Earlier he was worried because nobody came and he said maybe everyone forgot. Now the neighbors are here, so he picks up the spoon and gets ready to cook.

Question: At the end, Mateo says, “Who brought the beans?” How do you think he is feeling now, compared with how he felt earlier? Use details from the story.

8. What Is in a Camel’s Hump?

True-fact article · 225 words

1. A (Literal) Fat

Evidence: “A camel’s hump is full of fat.”

2. D (Main idea) A camel’s hump is full of fat, not water, and the camel can use that fat for energy

Question: What is the main idea of this passage?

3. A (Vocabulary) A camel’s hump holds food energy for later

Evidence: “The fat is like a pantry of food.”

4. B (Inference) It has not had enough to eat lately

Evidence: “When a camel cannot find enough to eat, its body uses the fat in the hump for energy. As the fat gets used up, the hump gets floppy.”

5. Written response

Sample answer: Turn a capital D on its side and it looks like one hump, so D is for dromedary. Turn a capital B on its side and it looks like two humps, so B is for Bactrian.

Question: Explain the trick the writer gives for telling a dromedary camel from a Bactrian camel.