Name_____

Pompeii

In 79 A.D., the ancient Roman city of Pompeii was destroyed by the eruption of a nearby volcano, Mt. Vesuvius. Although many other cities in history have been victims to eruptions of volcanoes and their deadly gas, lava, and ash, what makes Pompeii especially interesting is what happened years later.

In 1748, explorers in the Italian region where Pompeii once stood made an incredible discovery. Buried underneath layers of dirt, the city of Pompeii remained preserved. The original volcanic explosion had happened so quickly that most of the citizens were unable to escape. Their remains and the buildings of the city were still there, preserved, as if the year was still 79 A.D. instead of 1748. Some were frozen as if running from the fiery inferno while others were engaged in normal daily activities. The layers of dust had frozen the day in history.

Archeologists would later begin the careful process of excavating the now famous city from the layers of ash. The tragedy of Pompeii is the loss of the city and the approximately two thousand people who died during the eruption. Ironically, the deadly eruption helped preserve Pompeii so that no one will ever forget the name of this ancient Roman civilization.

Text Questions

1. What was the author's purpose in writing this text?
   a. to inform
   b. to entertain
   c. to persuade
   d. to explain

2. Citing information from the text, compare the discovery of Pompeii to another famous, historical discovery such as explorer Robert Ballard's discovery of the sunken *Titanic* or any other well-known discovery.

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. What conclusion can be drawn about the people of Pompeii in the year 79 A.D.?
   a. Most of the citizens were farmers.
   b. Women and men were treated equally.
   c. The citizens of Pompeii were not prepared for the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius.
   d. The people of Pompeii were unconcerned about living near an active volcano.

4. Using the information from the text, what can you infer an archeologist might do as part of his or her job?
   a. Study modern events to better understand connections to the past.
   b. Teach history at the university level.
   c. Create buildings that have similar qualities of architectural designs of the past.
   d. Excavate and study past civilizations and their artifacts.

5. Which of the following statements can be proven true from the information given in the text?
   a. Archaeologists believe Pompeii is the greatest historical discovery of its kind.
   b. Mt. Vesuvius will erupt again within the next ten years.
   c. All of the citizens of Pompeii could have survived the eruption if they had been given adequate warning that they were in danger.
   d. The 1748 discovery of Pompeii is considered a significant historical discovery.

©Teacher Created Resources

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

The Sticky Explosion

Molasses is a dark, sweet, sticky substance that most people only think about using for baking. However, enjoying molasses as a treat is not all this food is known for, especially to anyone who lived in Boston, Massachusetts, during the early 1900s. In fact, these people learned that molasses can be dangerous.

On January 15, 1919, disaster struck at the United States Industrial Alcohol Company. A tank holding 2.5 million gallons of molasses exploded. A wave of hot molasses poured from the tank burning and destroying whatever or whomever was unlucky enough to be in its path.

The spread of the molasses was not contained to the Industrial Alcohol Company building. The substance spread throughout the street, taking down structures, animals, and people. Twenty-one people died as a result of the explosion. Cleanup of the sticky substance took weeks. The source of the explosion was eventually blamed on the tank, which was described as simply not being large enough to hold the amount of molasses that it had contained.

Text Questions

1. Which would be a good source to learn more about the production of molasses?
   a. a website of a company currently producing molasses
   b. a flyer advertising where to purchase organic products, including molasses
   c. an article comparing honey and molasses
   d. a newspaper from 1919 with articles about the molasses explosion
2. Which statement is a fact about the story?
   a. Twenty-one people died as a result of the molasses explosion.
   b. The Industrial Alcohol Company knew there were problems with the molasses tank but did nothing to stop the explosion.
   c. The people of Boston, Massachusetts, fought for the closing of the industrial plant after the explosion occurred.
   d. The source of the explosion was never discovered.
3. What does the word *source* mean as it is used in the third paragraph?
   a. resource
   b. cause
   c. ending
   d. supply
4. What conclusion can be drawn about the molasses explosion in Boston?
   a. In any industrialized plant, proper equipment and safety measures must be ensured at all times for the safety of everyone.
   b. Infectious disease can be a result of any natural disaster.
   c. Molasses will always be made in the United States regardless of past dangers in the process.
   d. People who do not consume molasses would not be interested in the 1919 explosion.
5. Using information from the text, explain what could have been done to prevent the explosion at the factory.

_____

_____

_____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

The *Hindenburg*

In the 1930s, the nation of Germany was well known for its amazing flying machines known as dirigibles. These airships were enormous structures that were somewhat similar in shape to the blimps of today but much larger in size and more opulent in design. Another difference between the flying structures is the German dirigibles were filled with hydrogen, an extremely explosive substance.

The *Hindenburg* was one of the Zepplin Company's best airships. The airship began making flights to the United States in 1936. On May 3, 1937, passengers and crew would board the airship for what would become its final flight.

The flight to New Jersey was in itself unremarkable. Neither the crew nor its passengers reported any major problems during the three-day flight. But on the afternoon of May 6, thunderstorms were near the area where the airship was to land. Since hydrogen is flammable, lightning was always a concern for those flying on the *Hindenburg*. That day the crew managed to get the ship to its landing spot and dropped the ropes to secure the great airship just as tragedy struck.

A giant explosion rocked the airship, and within thirty-two seconds, the airship was lost in flames. Remarkably, sixty-seven of the ninety-seven people who were on board the *Hindenburg* managed to survive by reaching safety on the ground below.

The actual cause of the explosion remains a mystery, but one thing is certain: the explosion of the *Hindenburg* ended the era of the great airships.

Text Questions

1. What did the German dirigibles use as their main source of power?
   a. gasoline
   b. diesel
   c. hydrogen
   d. oxygen
2. Why was lightning a concern for anyone flying on the *Hindenburg*?
   a. The flight of the airship would not be as smooth.
   b. The pilot could not see well during storms with lightning.
   c. Stormy weather often caused motion sickness for many of the passengers on board.
   d. Lightning could cause an electric spark near the highly flammable airship.
3. From reading the text, what can one infer about traveling on the *Hindenburg*?
   a. The passage was very similar to modern-day airplanes.
   b. Passengers stayed on board the airships for several days.
   c. Most people would rather ride a ship from Europe to the Americas.
   d. The crew of the *Hindenburg* were only kind to German passengers.
4. Which country was known for creating and maintaining the flying dirigibles?
   a. Europe
   b. America
   c. Italy
   d. Germany
5. Using information from the text, explain how passengers might have survived the explosion of the *Hindenburg*.

_____

_____

_____

©Teacher Created Resources

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

The *Titanic*

In 1912, one of the most majestic ships of all times—the *Titanic*—set sail for America from England. The ship held not only some of the world's wealthiest people but also hundreds of immigrants hoping to find a new life in America. Sadly, many of those on board never reached American shores.

On the fifth night of the ship's first voyage, disaster struck when the ship came into deadly contact with an iceberg in the Atlantic Ocean. The force of the contact caused the ship, which had once been called "unsinkable," to be doomed.

By the end of the night, 1,500 of the 2,200 people on board would be dead. Too few lifeboats and inadequate safety procedures caused the demise of those who might have survived the terrible tragedy. For many, what happened to the *Titanic* is considered one of the greatest shipwrecks of all time.

Text Questions

1. What does the word *majestic* mean as it is used in the first paragraph?
   a. grand
   b. colossal
   c. enlightened
   d. imposing
2. What is the meaning of the last sentence—"what happened to the Titanic is considered one of the greatest shipwrecks of all time"?
   a. The ship was the largest to ever sink.
   b. There was a plethora of people who died when the ship sank.
   c. The shipwreck is a tragedy no one will ever forget.
   d. The story of the shipwreck is known by people in both England and America.
3. Based on the text, which of the following statements can be proven true?
   a. The *Titanic* was the grandest ship of its time.
   b. The immigrants on board the *Titanic* felt lucky to be going to America.
   c. There were not enough lifeboats for the number of passengers on board the *Titanic*.
   d. The ship's voyage was taking longer than expected.
4. What was the author's purpose in writing this text?
   a. to entertain
   b. to persuade
   c. to encourage
   d. to inform
5. Which would be the best source to learn more about icebergs?
   a. an encyclopedia
   b. an atlas
   c. an almanac
   d. a dictionary

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

The Twin Towers

The side-by-side towers in New York City, which were home to Manhattan's World Trade Center, were more commonly known as the Twin Towers. Each skyscraper was an incredible one hundred and ten stories high. Then, on September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center was attacked by terrorists. What happened on that date in history should never be forgotten.

The attack on September 11th was not the first time the area had been targeted. In 1993, a bomb had been detonated in the North Tower. This explosion killed six people and injured thousands of others. The tower, however, was able to withstand the explosive power of the blast.

In 2001, both towers were attacked. Two planes were flown directly into the buildings. The effect of these attacks was immediately catastrophic. Neither building was built to withstand such structural damage, and the collapse of each building was imminent. The south tower fell in less than one hour after being attacked, and the north tower collapsed soon afterwards. Both towers were completely gone. The land where the World Trade Center once stood is now known as Ground Zero. The day when the towers were attacked is remembered as one of the most infamous days in America's history.

Text Questions

1. What is most likely the reason the World Trade Center buildings were also called the Twin Towers?
   a. The two buildings had similar working hours.
   b. The two buildings were built on the same acre of land.
   c. The two buildings were identical in design.
   d. The two buildings were nothing alike.
2. Which statement is a fact about the story?
   a. The World Trade Center was attacked more than once.
   b. The buildings would have survived the attack if they had not been identical in design.
   c. September 11, 2001, is the most infamous date in America's history.
   d. No one should ever construct another building at Ground Zero.
3. Which is a synonym for the word *infamous* as it is used in the last paragraph?
   a. notorious
   b. fabulous
   c. famous
   d. cordial
4. Which title would be a good alternative for this text?
   a. "September: A Bad Month"
   b. "The End of Time"
   c. "The World Trade Center Attack"
   d. "A Day When All Hope Died"
5. Using information from the third paragraph, list three things in sequential order that happened that day.
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____

©Teacher Created Resources

LIVEWORKSHEETS