



Name _____

Date _____

LOUIS BRAILLE

A young French boy invented the Braille system of reading at the age of 12. This form of reading was different than any other. It changed words into raised dots in different combinations. The Braille system enabled blind people to finally read. Louis himself was blind.

Louis was born near Paris on January 4, 1809. He became blind by accident. When he was only three years old, he grabbed an awl. An awl is a tool used to make holes. The awl slipped and hurt his eye. His eye was infected, and soon the other eye became infected. Louis lost sight in both eyes. It was very difficult for Louis, but soon he learned to adjust to his blindness. He began looking for ways to continue learning. He went to a special school for the blind.

While there, he began creating an alphabet based on an old army code. It consisted of raised bumps and slashes, but it was a long process. When Louis arrived home on vacation, he began experimenting with a dull awl making bumps on paper. Each letter of the alphabet consisted of six dots arranged differently. This would make reading much faster and easier for a blind person. Louis Braille used the same tool that caused his blindness to help blind people to read! It was an amazing achievement.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following statements could be made about Louis Braille?
 - a. Louis learned to write books using the Braille system.
 - b. Louis's accident ended up improving the lives of blind people everywhere.
 - c. Louis Braille could have used more support from his parents.
 - d. Louis Braille used his anger to improve his life.
2. What conclusions can be drawn about Louis Braille after reading this passage?
 - a. He was religious and dedicated to missionary work.
 - b. He was wealthy and lived a life of luxury.
 - c. He was hard-working and persevering.
 - d. He was lazy and undetermined.
3. Which statement explains why Louis Braille's system was successful?
 - a. He began looking for ways to continue learning.
 - b. Each letter of the alphabet consisted of six dots arranged differently.
 - c. This would make reading much faster and easier for a blind person.
 - d. It was an amazing discovery.
4. What is the meaning of the word *enabled* as used in the passage?
 - a. made possible
 - b. injured
 - c. unable
 - d. judged



Name _____ Date _____

SACAGAWEA

Sacagawea was born in what is now the state of Idaho to a Shoshone chief. She was kidnapped by the Hidatsa when she was about 10 years old. She and another girl were purchased by Charbonneau, a French Canadian trapper who married Sacagawea. The famous duo Lewis and Clark asked Charbonneau to serve as an interpreter on their historical expedition. He agreed but asked if Sacagawea could go with them.

Sacagawea turned out to be a great asset to the group. She helped with translation, and according to Clark she was a “token of peace” to the Indians they would meet. Sacagawea would have her first child on the trail. She would also meet up with her brother, who was head of the Shoshone tribe. It was an incredible reunion. She did not stay with her lost family but continued on with the expedition.

The history of what happened after the Lewis and Clark expedition ended is somewhat fuzzy. Some experts say that Sacagawea went with her husband to St. Louis at the invitation of Clark. She would later die of a fever. Other accounts say that she went back to the Shoshone tribe on the Wind River Reservation, where she died in 1884. Either way, Sacagawea was a great person in American history.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by the word *asset* as used in the passage?
 - a. money
 - b. advantage
 - c. weakness
 - d. cook
2. What is the meaning of the phrase “token of peace”?
 - a. They didn’t have a dove so they used Sacagawea.
 - b. If the Indians saw Sacagawea, they knew she would be on their side.
 - c. When the Indians saw a female Indian, they would not think the men meant harm.
 - d. Sacagawea would receive payment if she was able to interpret and interact peaceably with the Indians.
3. After reading the passage, what can you infer about Sacagawea on the Lewis and Clark expedition?
 - a. She was a hard worker and able to handle the great strain of traveling.
 - b. She was weak and needed a lot of support.
 - c. She was able to find hope in her new life.
 - d. She was defiant and stubborn.
4. Which statement explains what made Sacagawea so famous?
 - a. She was the first Shoshone Indian to be kidnapped.
 - b. She was the first female to travel to the Northwestern United States.
 - c. She was able to serve as an interpreter and help to Lewis and Clark.
 - d. She was able to speak nine languages.



Name _____

Date _____

FRANK SINATRA

Frank Sinatra, who many consider to be one of the greatest singers of all time, never had plans to become a singer. Born on December 12, 1915, Frank grew up wanting to be a sportswriter. He worked as an office boy for a local newspaper. But after hearing Bing Crosby and Billie Holiday, he began singing. He got a quartet together to sing, which led to a job as a singing waiter at a roadhouse. He got his big break in 1939. He joined the Harry James band and sang famous songs like "From the Bottom of My Heart."

Frank was soon lured away by Tommy Dorsey. Dorsey helped him to become a sensation throughout the 1940s. His crooning voice drove the audiences wild. The women loved his soft voice. Sinatra got a start in movies in the late 1940s and he would continue to star in films throughout the 1950s. His first film was *Las Vegas Nights*.

Frank would marry four times. His last wife, Barbara, was said to have a calming effect on him. He was known for his wild parties with the "Rat Pack," which included such famous figures as Dean Martin and Sammy Davis, Jr. At the age of 71, he was hospitalized to have surgery on his intestines. In March 1994, he was hospitalized again. Two years after that, he was in the hospital again for a pinched nerve. Two months later, he would die of a heart attack.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. A good title for this reading passage would be . . .
 - a. "The Rat Pack"
 - b. "Frank Sinatra: The Actor"
 - c. "Life and Times of Frank Sinatra"
 - d. "Frank and Family"
2. Which of the following statements about Frank Sinatra is true?
 - a. He was hospitalized for a broken back.
 - b. He wanted to be a sportswriter for the newspaper.
 - c. He claimed ownership of the "Rat Pack."
 - d. He was taught to sing by Sammy Davis, Jr.
3. In the second paragraph, what does the word *crooning* mean?
 - a. soft, low tone
 - b. high-pitched voice
 - c. ear-splitting scream
 - d. low baritone
4. Why was Frank Sinatra's singing so appreciated by the fans?
 - a. He hypnotized the audiences.
 - b. He was creative and young.
 - c. He was able to sing in a crooning voice that audiences loved.
 - d. He had been taught voice lessons by a great singer.



Name _____

Date _____

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

Elizabeth Cady Stanton played a big role in the history of women's rights. She and her longtime colleague Susan B. Anthony remained friends to the end. Elizabeth was an active abolitionist, which meant that she was against slavery. She met and married her husband, Harry Stanton, in 1840. The two worked together to do away with slavery. They traveled to London for the World Anti-Slavery Convention. They were upset to find out that women were not allowed to be delegates.

Elizabeth came home to work on the issue of women's rights. This is when she met Susan B. Anthony. They worked as a team to help women gain more rights. Elizabeth played the role of writer, and Susan would set up the plans for the group. They worked to get women the right to vote. They were upset when only free men were given the right to vote after the Civil War. Elizabeth also worked to change the property laws for women. She also felt that women should be able to divorce if they were in abusive relationships.

Elizabeth would die on October 26, 1902. This was nearly 20 years before women were given the right to vote. Her home in Seneca Falls, New York, now has documents relating to Elizabeth's hard work and efforts for women on display. Her writings continue to inspire women today.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. Which sentence below shows Elizabeth's contributions to the women's rights movement?
 - a. Elizabeth played the role of writer, and Susan would set up the plans for the movement.
 - b. She met and married her husband Harry Stanton in 1840.
 - c. The two worked together to do away with slavery.
 - d. She died nearly 20 years before women were given the right to vote.
2. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
 - a. It introduces the main idea of the passage.
 - b. It discusses Elizabeth's contributions to women's rights.
 - c. It discusses Elizabeth's experiences as a writer.
 - d. It explains the relationship between Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth.
3. The best way to answer the previous question is to . . .
 - a. reread the entire passage.
 - b. reread the first paragraph.
 - c. look for the words "rights" and "Elizabeth Stanton."
 - d. reread the third paragraph and determine the main idea.



Name _____

Date _____

DANIEL BOONE

Daniel Boone was a great explorer of the frontier. He is given credit for settling the state of Kentucky. Born on November 2, 1734, to a weaver and a blacksmith, Boone was raised in Pennsylvania. His childhood was preparation for his adult life. He loved to make friends with the Indians and observe wildlife. At the age of 12, Daniel was given his first gun.

The family soon moved to North Carolina. It took a year for them to get there and get settled. Daniel would leave at 19 to fight in the French and Indian War. When he returned, he met a hunter named John Finley who told him stories about the frontier. This got Daniel thinking and dreaming. But he was not quite ready to explore. He married Rebecca Bryan.

In 1767, he traveled to the end of Kentucky. He was asked by Finley to explore even more country with his crew. It wasn't until two years later that he finally returned home. He had explored all over Kentucky. Daniel continued to explore for many more years. He eventually left Kentucky, saying that it was "too crowded." He died at the age of 85 and was buried next to his wife.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. The author feels that Daniel Boone was . . .
 - a. intelligent and loved learning.
 - b. motivated by money.
 - c. interested in traveling the oceans.
 - d. a great explorer in American history.
2. Which statement supports the author's opinion of Daniel Boone?
 - a. Daniel continued to explore for many more years.
 - b. Daniel Boone was a great explorer of the frontier.
 - c. He had explored all over Kentucky.
 - d. His childhood was preparation for his adult life.
3. The third paragraph informs the reader about . . .
 - a. Daniel's early life in North Carolina.
 - b. Daniel's travels across Kentucky.
 - c. Daniel's desire to stay in Kentucky.
 - d. Daniel's childhood in Pennsylvania.
4. Where else might this reading passage about Daniel Boone be found?
 - a. in a book about the French and Indian War
 - b. in a pamphlet about the great leaders of the United States
 - c. on a website about the early explorers of the United States
 - d. on a website about famous Indian traders of the United States