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Fluency Passage – Poem

**You Reached Out**

By Kami Nicholson

The storm raged through town like a  
    Wild beast attacking –  
Destroying everything in its path.  
I thought I had lost everything –  
    My toys, my books, my clothes,  
    My bed where I dreamed my happy dreams,  
    My room where I thought my childhood thoughts,  
    My home where I felt safe.  
My world was gone.  
I was scared and afraid.  
Then you reached out and gave me hope.

The water rose as quickly as a tiger pouncing –  
Driving us out into the streets.  
I thought I had lost everyone –  
    I was separated from my parents.  
    I couldn't find my brother.  
I was scared and alone.  
Then you reached out and gave me hope.

Soon my family will be reunited.  
With hope we can rebuild.  
With hope we can go on.  
With hope we can do anything.  
With hope I am not alone.  
I do not know your name.  
You do not know mine.  
But we are friends.

(155 words)

## **The Rainforest World Music Festival**

By Jina Lin

Imagine sitting on a mat in a traditional longhouse, listening to bands from around the world. That's what you would experience if you were at the Rainforest World Music Festival held on the island of Borneo.

At the festival, you might hear musicians from Portugal, Tanzania, South Korea, or Chile. At night, bands perform on an open-air stage. People sit on the prickly grass or stand up and dance to the rhythms of the music.

Although you may not understand the words of the songs or recognize all of the instruments, you can still appreciate the unique melodies, dancing, and cultural costumes.

Once a year, the sounds of the rain forest are joined by the rhythms of drum, string, and wind instruments. At the Rainforest World Music Festival, you can experience a variety of world cultures in a magnificent setting.

(141 words)

Fluency Passage – Play

**“The Ant and the Dove”**

A play based on Aesop’s fable dramatized by Felix Perez

**NARRATOR:** An ant, drinking at the river’s edge, was suddenly swept away by the rushing stream.

**ANT:** Help me! Help me! I am drowning!

**DOVE:** Here, little ant. I plucked this leaf for you to climb onto. You can float to safety on it.

**ANT:** Oh, you saved my life! Allow me to show my appreciation. I will gladly save your life someday.

**DOVE:** Now, that is really funny! How can you, a tiny ant crawling on the ground, ever save a bird like me.

**NARRATOR:** Shortly afterward, a bird catcher came prowling under the dove’s tree. He lifted his net to catch the dove, when suddenly the ant bit his foot. Jumping in pain, he yelled, which startled the dove.

**ANT:** Fly away, dove! He will never catch you.

**NARRATOR:** The dove escaped, realizing it was the courageous ant who had saved him. When the bird catcher had disappeared, the dove returned.

**DOVE:** Oh ant, I am sorry for laughing at you. You did save my life, and I will always be your grateful friend and watch out for you.

*Moral of the story: One good turn deserves another.*

(193 words)

Fluency Passage – Friendly Letters

**Letters from Venice**

By Luke Marcus

Dear Gina,

I cannot wait to go home! I have absolutely nothing in common with our cousin Sophia. I miss Indiana and my Saturday afternoon acting classes. How can I possibly act here in Venice when I don't even speak the language?

Your Desperate Brother,  
Tony

Dear Gina,

Today Sophia took me into some costume shops. It would be great to use the costumes to put on a play. Although I'm learning Italian, I don't know enough to read lines. In the afternoon we watched some actors in incredible costumes putting on a play. They were mimes, so they didn't use any words, just gestures and body language.

Your brother,  
Tony

Dear Gina,

Uncle Fabrizio surprised us today! He enrolled Sophia and I in mime classes. They are truly amazing! I hadn't realized you could communicate so effectively without using any words. Mime is so interesting to watch. I can't wait for my next class. Now I have another problem. Do you think Mom will let me spend the rest of the summer in Venice?

Your excited brother,  
Tony

(179 words)

## Fluency Passage – Speech

### **Future Forum**

By Alexander Lamar

Thank you for asking me to speak at the “Earth 2200 Conference.” It is important not only to think of how to tackle our everyday problems, but also to look to the future. What we do today to conserve our resources can have a lasting effect for many generations to come.

Let’s blast off to the future. Imagine you are standing on Earth 200 years from now. How will people get around? Will people still be driving cars? Or will there be other types of transportation? How will those vehicles be fueled?

Think about current developments in clean energy. What changes do we need to make today in order to ensure that we have energy for the future?

You are the leaders of today. That means you must be the leaders of tomorrow as well. Now is the time to think carefully about the choices you make that will impact the Earth in 2200.

(154 words)

## Fluency Passage – Journal Entries

### Zip ‘Er Up!

From the imagined journal of Gideon Sundback

1909

Sadly, I must write about the passing of my boss, Whitcomb Judson. I worked for him at the Automatic Hook and Eye Company, trying to improve his “clasp locker.” He invented a way to open and close boots with one hand. The slider slid over a row of hooks, pulling them together. It was a wonderful idea, but in sixteen years it has never been much of a success.

1917

Today I received a patent for my new “separable fastener.” It has two rows of teeth attached to a piece of cloth tape. I decided to sell these to the military, and both the Army and the Navy placed orders! We’re going to be making the fasteners with the machine I’m developing. We’ll be able to produce lots of fasteners without wasting any metal.

1923

The B.F. Goodrich Company started using my fasteners on their rubber boots! Mr. Goodrich himself suggested changing the name “Fastener” to “Zipper,” perhaps because of the sound the fastener makes when it is used. I can’t wait to see my zippers walking up and down the rainy streets!

(185 words)

### **The First Rainbow**

A Chippewa Tale retold by Jim Dailey

Nanbozho stared at the flowing waterfall and all the white flowers covering the meadow. *What if he painted those flowers bright colors?* Nanbozho rushed outside with his paints and brushes. He turned the violets blue, the lilies orange, and the daffodils yellow. He grinned as he painted the roses pink, purple, and red.

Two playful bluebirds flew overhead, chasing each other in the sparkling sunshine. As the birds zipped by, their wings dipped into the paints like feathery brushes.

Nanbozho tried to shoo the birds away, but they continued their diving until their feathers were splashed with every color. Nanbozho scolded the painted birds, and finally they flew away.

As they flew through the waterfall, some of the paint remained behind in the mist. Streaks of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet stained the flowing water. The sun made the splashes of color shimmer like jewels.

Nanbozho was delighted, and he shouted to the birds, “You have created a rainbow!”

From that day forward, whenever the sun shines on rain or mist, a colorful rainbow appears.

(177 words)

Fluency Passage – Advertisement

**Dare to Explore**  
**NASA Flies You to the Moon**

Meet the newest challenge. Be a part of space exploration.

Live on the Moon and be one step closer to Mars!

Michael D. Griffin of NASA has said, “America is now poised to take the next great step of space exploration and human spaceflight.”

Join the Citizen Crew Program (CCP) today to be a part of that next step. The CCP is the space travel program designed just for YOU!

Launch yourself into the future.

Learn to live and work in space.

Wake up and see Earth from your window.

Ride the newest lunar rover on your way to work.

Explore craters and basins on the surface of the moon. Vacation on Mars – and maybe even beyond!

As Earth’s resources start to disappear, CCP is searching for alternative solutions.

Be on a team that will solve our energy problems.

Be a leader. The future is now.

(152 words)

Fluency Passage – Poem

**Native American Voice**

By Courtney Ticsay

The beautiful land of our people  
Stretches far and wide, far and wide.  
We travel over it,  
Making faint footprints  
In winter snow and spring mud.

Across the wide land of our people  
We hunt and fish. Our dwelling places  
We create from Earth,  
Protecting ourselves from enemies, wind,  
And even wild animals.

My small life is part of the whole:  
I am in constant communion with the Great Spirit.  
Nature fills my dreams and days,  
And as I grow older, I better understand  
Brotherhood and the whisperings of the land.

Through good times and lean, my people survive,  
Because of our love for the land.  
Because we respect and cherish our place in nature,  
Respect and cherish the living things around us,  
Respect and cherish the beautiful land of our people.

(132 words)

## Fluency Passage – Letter

### **Letter from an Indentured Servant**

Adapted from a letter by Richard Frethorne

Virginia, 1623

Loving and Kind Father and Mother,

There is nothing here to comfort me. Since I left the ship, all I have eaten is watery porridge and peas. There is not enough meat or poultry to be had; I haven't seen any deer around, and I am working too hard to hunt for fowl. Early until late I work and work, awarded for my labor with yet more porridge. Four men have to share a meager serving of bread, so it's little wonder that so many have fallen ill.

Not only am I hungry, but I also have hardly any clothing. My cloak was even stolen by a man whom I believe sold it for food. Fortunately, Mr. Jackson in Jamestown is kind to me and has given me some fish, but I am still miserable and hungry. I want nothing more than to go home.

I do beg you, good Father, to release me from my great grief. I know you would cry if you saw my pathetic state. Give my love to all my friends and family. The answer to this letter will mean life or death for me; please, Father, send for me as soon as possible.

Richard

(202 words)

## Handy Betty

**REPORTER:** We are here today in Minnesota to learn about the Betsy Hager Chapter of the Patriots from the American Revolution. Lorna Johnson is going to tell us why this is known as the Betsy Hager Chapter.

**LORNA:** Elizabeth Hager was a true patriot from the time of the Revolution. She was born in Boston in 1750, and people called her “Handy Betty” or “Betsy the Blacksmith.”

**REPORTER:** Are you saying she was good with tools?

**LORNA:** She often made things from iron and wood.

**REPORTER:** How did she gain those skills?

**LORNA:** Betsy worked for a farmer. Later she worked for Samuel Leverett, a blacksmith and outspoken patriot. They would secretly repair old weapons and donate them to the soldiers.

**REPORTER:** Why did the pair have to work in secret?

**LORNA:** Because making weapons for fighting against the British government was illegal! During the Battle of Concord, the British abandoned six cannons. Betsy found them, and she and Samuel fixed them and gave them to the American soldiers. Because of these actions, our chapter of the Patriots from the American Revolution considers Betsy a hero.

(186 words)

## Fluency Passage – Song Lyrics

### **The Liberty Song**

By John Dickinson, 1768

Come, join hand in hand, brave Americans all,  
And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty's call;  
No tyrannous acts shall suppress you just claim,  
Or stain with dishonor America's name.

#### *Chorus:*

In freedom we're born, and in freedom we'll live.  
Our purses are ready. Steady, friends, steady;  
Not as slaves, but as freemen, our money we'll give.

Our worthy forefathers – let's give them a cheer –  
To climates unknown did courageously steer;  
Thro' oceans to deserts for freedom they came,  
And dying, bequeathed us their freedom and fame.

#### *(Repeat Chorus)*

The tree their own hands had to Liberty reared,  
They lived to behold growing strong and revered;  
With transport they cried, Now our wishes we gain,  
For our children shall gather the fruits of our pain.

#### *(Repeat Chorus)*

Then join hand in hand, brave Americans all,  
By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall;  
In so righteous a cause let us hope to succeed,  
For heaven approves of each generous deed.

(161 words)

## **Vulcan, God of Fire**

Retold by Frank DeLuca

Vulcan was born to Jupiter and Juno, the king and queen of the gods. When he was an infant, he looked so grotesque that Juno could not love him. She threw him from the top of Mount Olympus and in disgust. Vulcan tumbled down and down into the sea and was crippled by the fall. The sea goddess Thetis adopted Vulcan and kept him hidden from Juno.

One day, Vulcan found a burning coal on the beach. His experiments showed him that the hot coal melted metal. Vulcan transformed the metal into shiny, attractive objects such as jewelry, decorative cups and spoons, and shields. Thetis proudly wore the beautiful gifts her adopted son made for her, but Juno saw the sparkling jewelry and became jealous. Soon Juno uncovered the truth. Vulcan, her son, had survived. Juno wanted Vulcan back. Vulcan refused to leave his new life, but he sent Juno a jeweled throne as a gift. The dazzling seat was a clever trap, however; once Juno sat down in it, she could not stand up again. She remained stuck on the throne until Jupiter demanded that Vulcan free her.

In time, Vulcan built a workshop under Mount Etna. He served as blacksmith to the gods, designing armor and Jupiter's thunderbolts. Flaming red sparks and dense gray smoke shot from the mountaintop as he worked. That is how the word volcano came to be.

(232 words)

## **The Angry Sea**

By Selena Porter

On September 29, 2144, the beautiful island Mulavu disappeared. Some of us escaped on a ship. It all started ten years ago ...

Picture an island paradise under a golden red sky. Green palm trees sway in the tropical breezes. The leaves dance to the music of Mulavu – the sweet voices of local singers and the hypnotic beat of the drums. Families sit on straw mats, sharing stories and eating breadfruit and coconuts.

We all saw the signs. But some of us could not, or would not, believe them. Mulavu was a low-lying island, surrounded by high tides. Climate change had caused the sea level to rise, rise, rise, until it threatened our island home. We were sinking into the ocean.

My family took notice and built a ship. For a year we constructed our ship as others laughingly ignored what was to come.

Then one morning the sea swelled in anger. It was time. As we gathered what neighbors we could and leapt into our ship, the sea swallowed tiny Mulavu. All that was left was a dark spot beneath the water's surface. Now we live far from the palm trees and straw mats, but we still have our music to comfort us.

(204 words)

## **Fishing for News**

By Amy Losi

When was the last time you visited an aquarium to marvel at the sharks and the skates swimming along in their glass tanks? You may be surprised to learn that today's aquariums offer much more than just colorful fish to look at. They showcase unusual and often vulnerable species.

The African penguin is just such an example. These little birds actually make a sound like a donkey! They are at risk of extinction from both predators and polluted waters. Even more alarming is that global warming affects the penguin population. It appears that as the temperature increases, the number of some species of penguins decreases. Why is this happening? You can find out on your next aquarium visit.

Another interesting animal you might see at an aquarium is the highly dangerous lionfish. It is covered with an unusual pattern of red and white zebra-stripe camouflage. For further protection, it also has sharp spines. This ferocious fish swallows its prey whole! Lionfish used to live only in the Pacific Ocean, but recently they have appeared in the Atlantic Ocean as well. Their presence in the aquarium is sure to give you goose bumps.

Find these animals intriguing? Then get in the swim of things at your nearest aquarium and have a whale of a good time.

(216 words)

## **What Will You Do When It's Too Late?**

By Professor Vin Lee

The United Nations created World Environment Day in 1972. Every year countries around the world join forces on June 5<sup>th</sup> to hold environmental awareness activities. The purpose of the day is to do more than just talk. It is a call to action in every corner of the globe to unite and fight for a safer environment. Now is your tie to join in this global movement.

What are you doing to protect and save the planet? How do you show you care about Earth's future?

In honor of World Environment Day 2009, some people participated in tree-planting programs. To raise awareness of carbon dioxide levels, one woman rowed across the Pacific Ocean to encourage people to drive less and produce less waste. A man built a boat from recycled plastic to show how much waste we carelessly create. Many communities across the globe organized neighborhood cleanup campaigns. All of these efforts raised awareness of how to protect the Earth. What will *you* do for the World Environment Day?

Let's protect what we have before it's too late. Don't wait for another World Environment Day to come and go. Work with your community to start saving Earth today!

(198 words)

## Fluency Passage – Procedural Text

### On the Path of Pioneers

By Hannah Porter

It has been over 150 years since the first pioneers blazed the Oregon Trail, but you can follow these directions to trace the original trail on a map or globe.

1. Start the journey at Independence, Missouri, on the western side of the state. Trace a path west to the first landmark spotted by the pioneers, Courthouse Rock.
2. Continue west past scenic Chimney Rock and on to Fort Laramie. This was an important supply location for weary wagon travelers.
3. Now you have reached the Rocky Mountains, and the trail curves northwest toward Independence Rock. Pioneers carved messages into this rock, which is the most famous rock along the trail.
4. You will now trace a path southwest to Fort Bridger, a trading post.
5. From there your path will swing north to Soda Springs, a natural bubbling spring of carbonated water. Fort Hall, a trading post, stands just a short distance away.
6. To your west you will see the supply point Fort Boise. Keep tracing north past Whitman Mission to the Dalles. Here, travelers floated their wagons across the Columbia River on rafts. Nearby is Oregon City, the final stop where pioneers claimed their promise of new land.

(195 words)

## Fluency Passage – Poem

### A Long, Hard Journey

“Adventure is calling!” my father blared.  
The time had come to move out west,  
Where the healthful climate beckoned us –  
To the green, enticing land of Oregon!

A rocking wagon bore us along  
At night by the fire we listened to songs,  
Thought about what we had left behind  
And what lay ahead of us: mysterious, faraway Oregon!

Excitement wore off as the journey prolonged;  
Our rocking wagon still bore us along,  
But even when my parents fell ill,  
The refrain played on in my head: Oregon!

Times got harder and harder, no doubt.  
Our strength of will nearly gave out,  
But toward our goal we trudged on and on,  
To the land of hope and a future: Oregon!

Our spirits were low, but then one day  
We finally reached the place we would stay.  
Now here we are, and here we’ll remain,  
In the breathtaking, green land of Oregon!

(150 words)

## **A Light for Liberty**

By Michael Sanchez

One of the most famous American monuments wasn't even made in America – it was made in France! The French government gave the Statue of Liberty to the United States to show the friendship between France and the United States. Created to honor the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the statue represents freedom.

In the statue's upraised right arm burns the torch of freedom. Her left arm holds a tablet with the date July 4, 1776 – America's birthday. Although the statue looks green today, the sculptors created it from brilliant copper. The man who later designed the Eiffel Tower built the statue's framework.

After it was finished, the statue arrived in the United States in more than 200 crates. It took four months to reassemble it on Liberty Island in New York Harbor. Americans built the base of the statue to acknowledge the bond and respect between the United States and France.

Over time, Lady Liberty has become more than just a national treasure. She represents freedom and opportunity to people around the world. She stands proudly in the harbor, welcoming generations of visitors and immigrants to our nation's shining shores.

(195 words)

### **What Didn't He Invent?**

By Fay Parker

What do the microphone, the gramophone, the helicopter, and acoustic tiles have in common? Emile Berliner invented or improved upon all of them.

Berliner was born in 1850 and immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1870. Six years later he saw Alexander Graham Bell's new telephone in Washington, D.C. Excited about its potential, Berliner created a transmitter that magnified the sound coming through the telephone. This type of transmitter was later called a microphone.

Berliner then created a gramophone that could play flat discs, which took the world by storm under the name "records." Berliner's gramophone style appeared as part of a famous trademark – a painting of a white dog with dark ears, shown starting at the gramophone's mouthpiece. The modern-day Grammy Awards are golden statues of a gramophone like Berliner's original!

Berliner's inventions did not stop there. He built a motor to power helicopters; and he designed acoustic, or sound-absorbing, wall tiles. After his daughter became ill, he advocated milk pasteurization. Berliner even wrote rhymes for a book. When he died at the age of 78, he left the world with many accomplishments.

(186 words)

## Fluency Passage – Fairy Tale

### A Leaf from Above

A delicate, tiny leaf fell from the clouds onto the soft earth. Immediately it took root, sprouting its shoots across the forest.

“What a ridiculous looking shoot!” sneered the other plants.

When winter came, the sprawling plant glowed like the sun beneath the velvet snow. In the spring, the plant’s bloom was more beautiful than all the other forest plants. A professor of botany heard the jealous whispering of the forest plants and examined the source. He declared that the plant did not belong to any class or species he had ever seen!

The dazzling plant gave off the sweetest perfume, and its flowers glittered and sparkled like shooting flames. It grew so tall and stately that birds bowed to it as they flew by. One day, a shepherd came by and ignored the glow of the glorious plant. He pulled it up from the ground, carried it away, and burned it.

Soon after, the king became melancholy. A wise man said the plant that fell from the clouds was the only remedy for what ailed the king. The poor shepherd heard the news and was dismayed. In his ignorance he had destroyed the magic plant. When the king learned the plant’s fate, he ordered a golden railing to be placed around the spot in the forest where the plant had once stood so proudly.

(225 words)

## **Get Life from the Desert**

By Lina Suarez

Cacti accomplish an amazing feat by growing in hot, dry conditions. They store water in their thick stems, making it easier for them to grow in arid locations. These unusual plants often appear on rocky hills. Some varieties even grow colorful flowers! If you want to grow a cactus, follow these steps:

1. Choose a shallow planter or wide clay pot so that the roots can remain close to the soil's surface.
2. Place a layer of small rocks or gravel at the bottom of the pot. Then pour in a mixture of good soil and clean sand. Do not use sand by itself.
3. Water your cactus once a week or less. When you water it, give the soil a good soaking. Let the soil dry out before watering it again. Always use lukewarm water to avoid hurting the roots.
4. Keep your cactus in a sunny spot because it required a lot of light – up to 12 hours a day. You can use artificial lights in addition to natural sunlight.
5. A cactus grows slowly, so be patient. Turn your plant every few weeks so that the sun can shine on all sides. And remember, watch out for those spines.

(197 words)

## **Busy as a Bee**

By Latisha Lawrence

Bees get all the credit when it comes to pollinating plants. The truth is, though, bees are not the only insects that contribute to the life cycles of plants. Beetles, flies, moths, and butterflies also work industriously.

For bees, the nectar and pollen from the flowers they visit become food. They choose bright, colorful flowers that are bursting with nectar and smell very sweet or minty.

Surprisingly, beetles are very important to the pollination process; however, they are also destructive, often eating petals as they work. Beetles search for white or green round flowers with nectar and a strong, fruity smell.

Flies pollinate flowers that are dull and pale, dark brown, or purple. Often the flowers are funnel shaped and give off odors like the stench of rotting meat.

Moths, on the other hand, pollinate mainly at night. They seek pale or white flowers, with overpowering scents and an abundance of nectar.

Butterflies prefer wildflowers, but as pollinators they are not as effective as bees. They prefer brightly colored flowers with lots of nectar.

Now that you know all about pollination, you can tell others that bees are one part of a complex system.

(194 words)

## **Sensing Flowers**

By the Editor of Botany Today

This month's newsletter is about flowers. Flowers can appeal to all of your five senses. Let me explain!

What sense comes to mind when you think of flowers? You may think of the fragrance of living blooms. However, you may not realize that dried flowers can also freshen the air inside a room.

How about your other senses? Another obvious one is your sense of sight. Flowers are lovely to look at, whether they are growing in the ground or in a pot or arranged in a vase. The colors around you can come from flowers as well. For centuries people have used petals to create natural dyes.

Have you ever tried tasting a flower? Some varieties of flowers appear in salads, and some are painted with egg white and sprinkled with sugar to decorate desserts. Edible flowers include pansies, marigolds, and dandelions.

The two remaining senses are touch and sound. Rose petals feel velvety soft, but their stems contain sharp, piercing thorns. As for sound, the buzzing of bees and rustling leaves can indicate that flowers are nearby.

Next time you see a flower, think about how you can appreciate it with all your senses!

(196 words)

## Land Without Laws

By Josh Henry

Our spacecraft landed uneventfully on Emerald 9, a newly discovered planet in a parallel universe uninhabited by humans! We arrived as ambassadors looking to form a friendly alliance with our long-lost relatives.

After hailing a hover-cab, we asked the driver how much the ride to the hotel would cost. He plainly stated, “Whatever I want to charge you. None of the cabs have fixed rates.”

*How odd!* We thought, but we had little choice – we had an urgent meeting to attend and needed to unpack quickly. The hover-cab navigated the main thoroughfare, which had no traffic lights. We asked the driver about this, and he replied that there were no lights, no stop signs, no traffic regulations of any kind. Sure enough, when we came to a wide intersection, cars were scattered in all directions. Drivers honked, pedestrians yelled, and chaos reigned. We were shocked by such disorder.

At the hotel, we checked in and noticed that we did not have to pay taxes on our bill. The clerk informed us that the planet did not levy any taxes. In fact, laws were very limited, they had no idea what a court system even was, and they had no constitution! People essentially did as they wished; it was an uncontrollable free-for-all. We realized we had much more work to do than we initially thought!

(224 words)

## Constitutionally Speaking

By Danielle O’Neille

The Future Lawyers Club was meeting for the first time. The club was new in the school, and a dozen eager students were chattering away before the adviser called them to order. He banged a gavel on the desk.

“Welcome! I am Mr. Davis, your adviser. You will run these meetings yourselves in the future; but since this is our first one, can anyone suggest how we should proceed?” Mr. Davis asked the students.

“Make a list of project ideas?” Victor offered.

“Well, before we do that,” Mr. Davis said, “we need to address something: How will this club be run?”

“Oh, do you mean create rules?” Maritza asked.

Lucas jumped up and excitedly blurted, “A constitution! The club needs a constitution!” Mr. Davis nodded.

The group agreed on five articles for their constitution and listed them on chart paper with colored markers:

**Article 1:** Name of the Club

**Article 2:** Club’s Purpose and Activities

**Article 3:** Club’s Officers and Their Duties

**Article 4:** How to Run Elections

**Article 5:** Rules for Selecting New Members

The only thing left to do was get to work!

(185 words)

## **The Mysterious Brown**

By Roger Rivera

*Brown v. Board of Education* was a landmark court case. It upheld the Fourteenth Amendment, which said that a state could not deny anyone equal protection under the law. It helped end segregation in American schools by challenging the idea that children should attend separate schools based on the color of their skin. So just who was the “Brown” in this case?

Thirteen parents of African American children from Topeka, Kansas, were named in a lawsuit against the board of education. They all wanted their children to attend nearby schools (which were whites-only). The name of one of those children, Linda Brown, became associated with the court action.

Linda was born in 1943. She grew up in an integrated neighborhood, playing happily with other children her own age. As a third-grader, however, she was not allowed to attend her neighborhood school. Instead, she had to take a bus to an African American school a mile away. Linda couldn’t understand why she couldn’t go to school with her friends.

All that changed when the case was settled in 1954, blowing the lid off the idea of “separate but equal.” Linda was finally able to attend her neighborhood school. Today she travels around the country speaking in favor of equal rights for all.

(212 Words)

## Fluency Passage – Interview

### Ask the Judge

By Sylvia Santos

**TEACHER:** Welcome, Judge Miller. Our class has questions about the Constitution and its amendments.

**JUDGE:** I'll be happy to answer them. Yes?

**MARIA:** At what age will I be able to vote?

**JUDGE:** The 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment says you can vote at 18.

**TONY:** Is the Bill of Rights part of the Constitution?

**JUDGE:** It was added as the first ten amendments.

**LILLY:** What happens if the President gets sick or dies?

**JUDGE:** The 20<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Amendments state that the vice president becomes President. The new President then appoints his or her own Vice President.

**EVAN:** If you are a U.S. citizen living in another country, can you still run for President?

**JUDGE:** Yes, but only if you were born in the United States and had lived here for at least 14 years.

**EMILY:** How is the cabinet elected?

**JUDGE:** The President chooses all of his or her cabinet members, and the Senate confirms them. Now I have a question for all of you: Is it true that American citizens do not directly elect the President?

**JO:** Yes! The Electoral College casts the deciding votes.

(185 words)

## **Fly to the Rescue**

A Native American Tale

There was a time when the world was new, and many fish lived in the rippling rivers. A thirsty moose heard about the pure, tantalizing water in the river and came to drink. He drank so much that it seemed the river would soon vanish. In fear of losing their homes, the animals living in and near the river trembled. They wanted to drive the moose away; however, even the big, burly bear felt intimidated by the moose's incredible size.

Finally, a lowly fly volunteered to help. The other animals jeered at him. How could a tiny fly frighten a magnificent moose? The fly waited for the moose to appear, and he flew into action. The fly bit the moose's leg sharply. The moose stamped his foot, but the fly just bit him again.

Every time the moose stamped his foot, the ground sank lower and the water rushed in to refill it. The fly bit the moose all over his body, sending him into quite a frenzy! The moose dashed about, shook his head, stamped his feet, and snorted loudly, but the fly's bites continued unceasingly. At last the moose charged off, never to return. The fly was proud of his achievement, and he boasted to the animals that had doubted him, "Even the very small can stand up for their rights."

(223 words)

## **Mystery Meal**

By Sam Umeki

“Oh, no!” I cried. “I know I left it here. Now where did it go?” I scratched my head and looked around the garage in disbelief. Lily came running outside and asked me what was wrong. I told her that I had been collecting canned goods and boxes of food for the food drive. The local fire station had asked everyone to donate food for those less fortunate. When Lily scanned the garage and pointed to a dog bone on the floor, I laughed. “Do you really think Buster took a whole bag full of food?” I asked.

We walked outside and saw four footprints on the path leading around to the back door. “Look!” shouted Lily. “I bet those footprints belong to the thief!” As we scrutinized them, I noticed two were suspiciously the size of my sneakers. The other two matched Lily’s sneakers.

We looked for clues in the bushes and in the yard; however, nothing turned up. Finally we went inside and saw Grandma stirring a large pot on the stove. The aroma of her “Everything Stew” made me hungry. Then it struck me. “Grandma, where did you get the ingredients for that stew?” I asked.

She smiled and said, “In a bag in the garage.” I groaned; I had to think fast. “I know! We’ll eat the stew and donate that instead,” I said. Case closed!

(230 words)

## **A Braid of Hope**

By Jessica Wallace

Dear Journal,

Today in school we had a special assembly. We learned about different ways that children can help others. One of the speakers, addressing all of the girls with long hair, told us about a nonprofit organization called *Helpful Locks*. Girls donate a long braid of their hair, which the organization fashions into wigs for children who are bald. Some of those children lose their hair due to medical conditions, whereas others lose it because of treatments they get to cure diseases. It sounds like a worthy cause, but I love my hair! I could never just cut it off like that.

Dear Journal,

I had a long talk with my family after dinner tonight. I told them about *Helpful Locks*. Mom listened and said I could cut or keep my hair, and she would support me either way. Then she reminded me that hair grows back fairly quickly. Does it ever! It seems like my brother is always getting his hair cut. I still can't imagine cutting mine, but I'll keep thinking about it.

Dear Journal,

Today *Helpful Locks* collected hair at our school. Before I left for school this morning, I asked Mom to braid my hair. Guess what was missing when I arrived home! When I pictured the happy face of the child who will wear my hair, the decision was easy to make.

(228 Words)

## Fluency Passage – Newspaper Article

### **Inspired to Help**

By Keith Kaplen

Adults are not the only ones interested in lending a helping hand. Local students have begun giving up their own time – afternoons and weekends – to do charitable work. Instead of grabbing a snack and watching the tube, they think of others.

The concept is simple. First, the students figure out a way to raise money. Second, they choose a worthwhile charity or cause to receive that money. Finally, they envision a creative (or traditional) way to accomplish their acts of kindness.

One of the most popular money makers is also one of the oldest – a lemonade stand. One local fifth-grader told what inspired her to create a lemonade stand: “I heard about a terminally ill girl named Alex, who created Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation. I wanted to help her organization donate money toward a cure for pediatric cancer. So far I’ve made \$100!”

Children who are not in the lemonade business hold bake sales, collect food or money, collect toys or school supplies, sell things, or even wash cars.

All of the money raised goes to designated charities. These students do not get paid or receive anything in return for their time. What they do get is the satisfaction of knowing that despite their age, they can make a difference in someone’s life.

(214 words)