

# **BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUMMER READING PACKET**

Directions: Read each passage using your close reading strategies. You may need to read it more than once. Then answer the matching question completely. Check for good grammar and spelling.

## **Grade 3 going into 4**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Australia's Cutest Animals

by Guy Belleranti

In the trees of Australia's eucalyptus forests lives a cute animal that some people call a bear. However, it isn't related to bears at all. This animal is the koala.

Koalas belong to a group of pouched mammals called marsupials. Other marsupials include the kangaroo, wombat, wallaby and possum.

Koalas in the southern parts of Australia grow larger than koalas in the north. Full-grown koalas can weigh as much as 31 pounds in the southern parts of the continent. In the north, koalas only grow to about 11 pounds.



At birth a baby koala, or joey, is about the size of a jelly bean. The newborn joey is hairless and blind, but it's still able to get into mom's pouch, where it sleeps, nurses and slowly develops and grows. After six or seven months it outgrows the pouch and rides on mom's back. It also continues to nurse on mom's milk. At the same time the young koala begins eating a substance from mom's intestines called "pap". The "pap" contains bacteria that help the young koala adjust to eating and digesting an adult diet of eucalyptus leaves. By the time it's a year old the young koala stops nursing and is ready to live on its own. However, it also stays in close contact with other koalas in its eucalyptus tree forest home.

Koalas are well adapted to living in trees. While they look soft and cuddly, they have long claws on both their hands and their feet. These claws help them grip branches and climb. And did you know koalas have two thumbs on each hand? This increases their climbing ability. The rough skin on their hands and feet also helps them move in the trees.

Although eucalyptus leaves are the koalas' main food, koalas don't eat the leaves of

all eucalyptus trees. Australia has hundreds of types of eucalyptus trees, but koalas only eat the leaves from a small number of them. The leaves also provide koalas with most of their water. In fact, koalas eat so many eucalyptus leaves that they smell like eucalyptus cough drops!



If you ever have the opportunity to see a real koala, chances are it will be sleeping. Koalas are asleep more often than they're awake. On average, a koala will sleep 16 hours or more every day! They're most active after sunset, going from tree to tree both to eat and to be with other koalas. Sometimes they leap from one tree to another. Other times they'll climb down to the ground to go up another tree. However, being on the ground also puts them in greater danger from wild predators like dingoes, foxes, and owls. Domestic dogs and cars also threaten koalas when they're on the ground.

Unfortunately, much of the forest habitat of koalas has been destroyed to make room for farming, mining, buildings, roads and more. Let's hope what is left can be protected so these animals can always live wild and free.

### **About the Author**

Guy Belleranti works as a docent at Reid Park Zoo in Tucson, Arizona. The information in this article comes mainly from his experiences working with animals and teaching others.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**"Australia's Cutest Animals" By Guy Belleranti from Teacher Worksheets website**

1. Koala's are well adapted to living in trees. In this context the word adapted means.

- a. Fight against
- b. Failed to
- c. Adjust to survive or fit in
- d. Refuse to

2. Koala's are well adapted to living in trees.

Choose three details from the text to support this fact. The details should describe or explain how koalas use their physical features to adapt to where they live.

Detail #1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Detail #2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Detail #3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Koalas are awake mostly after sunset. Using evidence from the text, describe koalas' activities when they are awake and active.

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4. According to the information in the article, the young koala eats a substance from the mom's intestines called "pap". Use evidence from the text to explain how this substance helps the young koalas.

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# Lightning Strikes!

(Genre: Magazine Article)

## Stay Safe

1. Lightning kills more people than hurricanes or tornadoes. Only floods kill more people during storms. If a storm is near, stay inside. If you are outside during a storm, try to find shelter. If you can't, get inside a building, stay away from tall trees and open fields. If you want to learn more about lightning, try <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/kids.htm>.

## Zapped

2. No one knows how many people are hit by lightning each year. Even experts are unsure. Some say it's about 200, and others say it's more than 1,000. Although people can be killed by lightning strikes, most survive. People who were hit by lightning often have strange problems that doctors cannot explain. Their symptoms include headaches, forgetfulness, and trouble sleeping. A group of survivors meets every year in Tennessee to share stories. It's good to be around others who understand.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**"Lighting Strikes" excerpt from a magazine article**

**From Common Core Progress; English Language Arts; Sadlier School**

1. If you are outside during a storm, try to find shelter. If you can't get inside a building, stay away from tall trees and open fields.

What context clues in the text above best describes the meaning of the word shelter as used in this context?

- a. It is unsafe
- b. During a storm
- c. Tall trees and open fields
- d. Inside a building

2. Their symptoms include headaches, forgetfulness, and trouble sleeping. Another word for symptoms in this context is:

- a. Explain
- b. Strange
- c. Strikes
- d. Problems

3. Explain the author's point of view about the meeting of lightning strike survivors? Use evidence from the text to support and explain your answer.

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4. What most likely is the reason the author used headings in the text?

- a. To organize and categorize the information for the reader
- b. To define the vocabulary for the reader
- c. To entertain the reader

## Eating While Reading

By Gary Soto

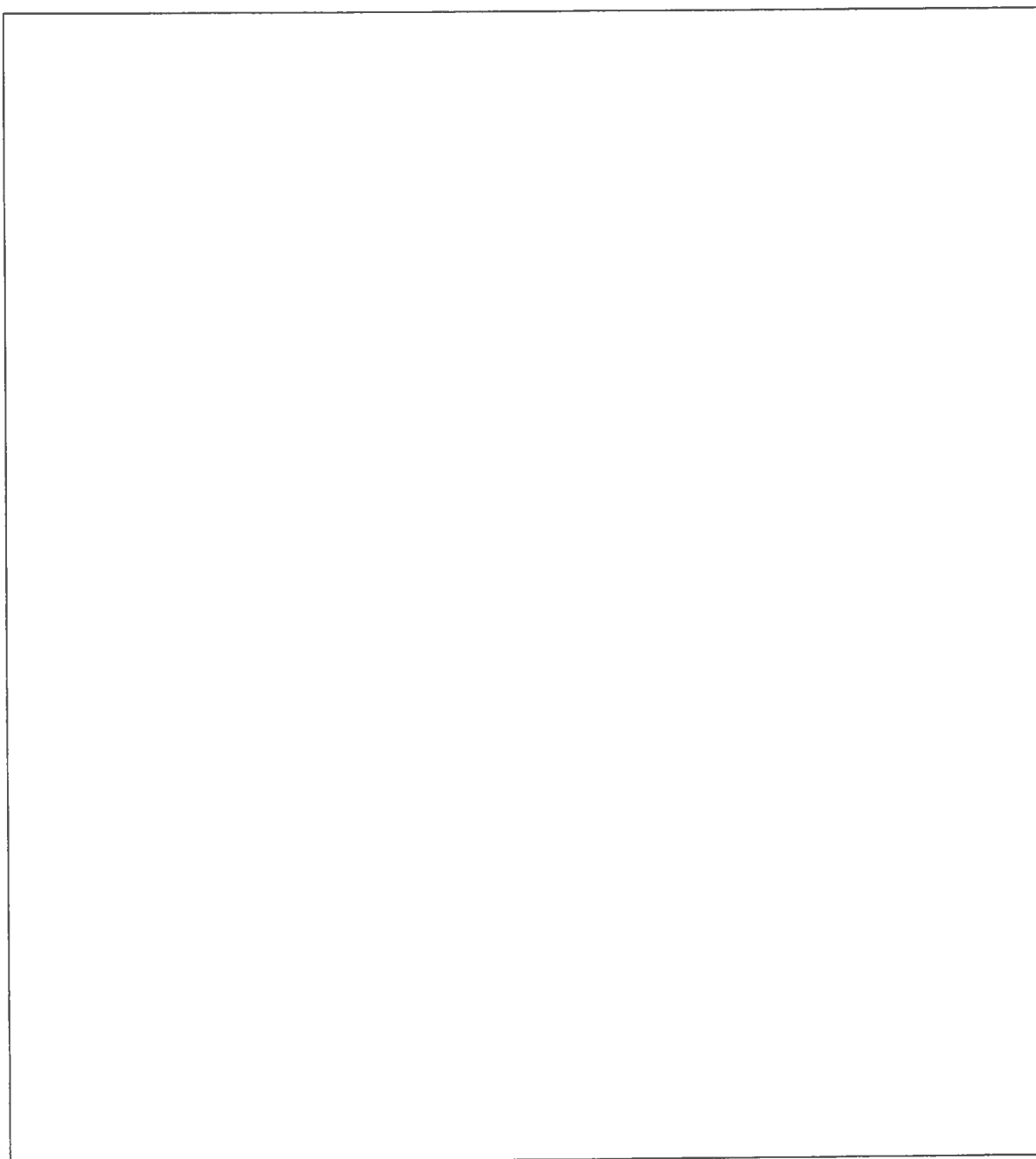
What is better  
Than this book  
And the churn of candy  
In your mouth,  
Or the balloon of bubble gum,  
Or the crack of sunflower seeds,  
Or the swig of soda,  
Or the twist of beef jerky,  
Or the slow slither  
Of snow cone syrup  
Running down your arms?

What is better than  
This sweet dance  
On the tongue,  
And this book  
That pulls you in?  
It yells, "*Over here!*"  
And you hurry along  
With a red, sticky face.

*"Eating While Reading" from CANTO FAMILIAR by Gary Soto. Copyright © 1995 by Gary Soto. Used by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.*

1. Writer's craft is how the author uses words and language to help readers create pictures in their minds.

Draw a picture of the images you saw in your mind while reading the poem, "Eating While Reading."





# Helen Keller



- **Occupation:** Activist
- **Born:** June 27, 1880 in Tuscumbia, Alabama
- **Died:** June 1, 1968 in Arcan Ridge, Easton, Connecticut
- **Best known for:** Accomplishing much despite being both deaf and blind.

## Biography:

### Where did Helen Keller grow up?

Helen Keller was born on June 27, 1880 in Tuscumbia, Alabama. She was a happy healthy baby. Her father, Arthur, worked for a newspaper while her mother, Kate, took care of the home and baby Helen. She grew up on her family's large farm called Ivy Green. She enjoyed the animals including the horses, dogs, and chickens.

### Illness

When Helen was around one and a half years old she became very sick. She had a high fever and a bad headache for several days. Although Helen survived, her parents soon realized that she had lost both her sight and her hearing.

### Frustration

Helen tried to communicate with the people around her. She had special motions she would use to indicate that she wanted her mom or her dad. However, she would also get **frustrated**. She realized that she was different and it was extremely difficult to let others know what she needed. She would sometimes throw tantrums, kicking and hitting other people in anger.

## Annie Sullivan

Soon Helen's parents realized that she needed some special help. They contacted the Perkins Institute for the Blind in Boston. The director suggested a former student named Annie Sullivan. Annie had been blind, but had her eyesight restored by surgery. Perhaps her unique experience would allow her to help Helen. Annie came to work with Helen on March 3, 1887 and would be her helper and companion for the next 50 years.



Helen and Annie together

## Learning Words

Annie began to teach Helen words. She would press the letters of words in to Helen's hand. For example, she would put a doll in one of Helen's hands and then press the letters of the word D-O-L-L into the other hand. She taught Helen a number of words. Helen would repeat the words into Annie's hand.

However, Helen still didn't understand that the hand signs had meaning. Then one day Annie put Helen's hand into water coming from a pump. Then she spelled out water into Helen's other hand. Something clicked. Helen finally understood what Annie was doing. **An entire new world opened up for Helen.** She learned a number of new words that day. In many ways it was one of the happiest days of her life.

## Learning to Read

Next Annie taught Helen how to read. Helen must have been very bright and Annie an amazing teacher, because soon Helen could read entire books in **Braille**. Braille is a special reading system where the letters are made out of little bumps on a page.

Imagine trying to learn how to read if you couldn't see or hear. It's truly amazing what Helen and Annie were able to accomplish. At the age of ten Helen could read and use a typewriter. Now she wanted to learn how to talk.

## **Learning to Talk**

Helen Keller learned how to talk from Sarah Fuller. Sarah was a teacher for the deaf. By resting her hand on Sarah's lips, Helen learned how to feel sound vibrations and how the lips moved to make sounds. She started off learning a few letters and sounds. Then she advanced to words and, finally, sentences. Helen was so happy that she could say words.

## **School**

At sixteen years old Helen attended Radcliffe College for women in Massachusetts. Annie attended school with her and helped to sign the lectures into Helen's hand. Helen graduated from Radcliffe in 1904 with honors.

## **Writing**

While in college, Helen began to write about her experiences being deaf and blind. She first wrote a number of articles for a magazine called the *Ladies' Home Journal*. These articles were later published together in a book called *The Story of My Life*. A few years later, in 1908, she published another book called *The World I Live In*.

## **Working for Others**

When Helen grew older she wanted to help other people like herself. She wanted to inspire them and give them hope. She joined the American Foundation for the Blind and traveled the country giving speeches and raising money for the foundation. Later, during World War II, she visited with wounded army soldiers encouraging them not to give up. Helen spent much of her life working to raise money and awareness for people with disabilities, especially the deaf and the blind.

1. Why did the author use subtitles to organize the text? (CCSS.ELA.RI.3.5)

- a) Subtitles help us to understand the meaning of words.
- b) Subtitles break up the passage so that it is not too long to read.
- c) Subtitles clarify what information I will find in that section.
- d) Subtitles serve as a hyperlink to other information.

2. Read this sentences from the section titled **Frustration**. (CCSS.ELA.RI.3.4)

Helen tried to communicate with the people around her. She had special motions she would use to indicate that she wanted her mom or her dad. However, she would also get **frustrated**. She realized that she was different and it was extremely difficult to let others know what she needed. She would sometimes throw tantrums, kicking and hitting other people in anger.

Explain the meaning of the **frustration**. What clues found in the text help you to determine it's meaning?

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# Jesse Owens



1. Jesse Owens was born on September 12, 1913 in Alabama. He lived with his parents and six older brothers and sisters. His full name was James Cleveland Owens, but his family called him "J. C.". His whole family worked hard to earn enough money to buy food. Jesse earned money by picking cotton.
2. When Jesse was 9 years old he and his family moved to Ohio. His teacher misunderstood him when he said his name was "J. C" and she wrote down Jesse and that name stayed with him for the rest of his life.

3. Jesse went to East Technical High School and joined the track team. He was a good student and an outstanding runner and athlete. He won all the major races three years in a row and set and tied national and world records in running and broad jumping.
4. After high school, he went to Ohio State University. He continued his winning ways on the track team. Jesse got married and had to work, study, practice and compete in the races. When he was a sophomore in college he went to a track meet in Michigan and tied the world record of 9.4 seconds in the 100-yard dash. He also broke the world running broad jump record with a jump of 26 feet and 8 ¼ inches. He didn't stop there, he set a new world record in the 220-yard **hurdles** at 22.6 seconds!
5. In 1936, Jesse Owens went to Berlin, Germany and competed in the Olympic Games. At that time, the head of the German government was Adolf Hitler and he wanted the world to see what great athletes the Germans were. Hitler was prejudiced against black athletes and thought they were inferior to the Germans. Hitler was angry when Jesse Owens, a black athlete, won four gold medals that year and refused to congratulate him. Unlike Hitler, the German people cheered Owens for his outstanding abilities. One German athlete, Luz Long, became friends with Jesse even though he lost the gold medal to Jesse and came in second.
6. After the Olympic Games, Jesse Owens was a hero, but because he was black, he still faced discrimination when he returned to the United States. Even though he was one of the world's greatest athletes, he was not invited to the White House to be congratulated by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Jesse, as a black man, still had to ride in the back of the city buses and couldn't eat in many restaurants or live in many neighborhoods.
7. Now that he was famous he could earn money in professional races and exhibitions. People from all over the United States came to these events to see the legendary Jesse Owens. He also toured with the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. When he didn't earn enough money as an athlete, Jesse worked as a janitor and disc jockey.
8. When he was 35 years old, Jesse no longer needed to compete in sports events anymore. He became a business consultant and a successful speaker. He spent much of his time working with young people and urged them to follow their dreams. In his later years, Jesse stopped running. He stayed physically fit by walking, lifting weights and swimming.
9. Jesse Owens received many awards during his lifetime. In 1976, President Gerald Ford presented him with the Medal of Freedom, the highest any American can receive. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter honored Owens with the Living Legend award. Finally, Jesse was formally recognized for both his life and athletic achievements. Jesse Owens died on March 31, 1980.





3. Read this sentence from Paragraph 4:

He also set a new world record in the 220 yard **hurdles**.

The word “**hurdles**” has several meanings. Read the two meanings below and then explain how both of them apply to Jesse Owens. (CCSS.ELA.RI.3.4)

1. obstacles that a runner has to jump over in certain track and field events
2. problems or difficulties

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