

3rd grade Winter Break Packet

Due January 5th, 2026

Name: _____ Section: _____

This packet is FAST Reading practice designed to help students strengthen the skills they use on the FAST assessment. The goal is to practice reading carefully, answering questions accurately, and finding text evidence.

This packet WILL be counted as a grade for completion, so it is important that students complete it carefully and thoughtfully.

Please follow **ALL** directions to receive **full credit**:

1. Read each passage carefully.
2. Take your time — reread if needed.
3. Answer every question.
4. Do not leave any questions blank.
5. Highlight text evidence for **EACH** question.

○ After selecting your answer, highlight the sentence or sentences in the passage that prove your answer.

○ This step is **REQUIRED** for full credit.

Read the passage “The Lizard and the Frog” and then answer Numbers 1 through 4.

The Lizard and the Frog

- 1 Frog sat on a stone beside the river. She enjoyed watching the world happen around her. From her spot, she could see Lizard across the river, and Lizard was acting very strange, indeed.
- 2 One by one, Lizard dropped stones in the river and then watched hopefully as each disappeared underwater. Over and over he tried, and with each try, the stone he chose would be larger than the last.
- 3 Lizard handled the stones for a while, but then he disappeared in a bunch of reeds at the river’s edge. After some time, Lizard came out from the thicket with long pieces of reeds filling his arms. He sat down on the bank and began working with them by weaving one piece of reed in and out through several others.
- 4 Frog was bursting with curiosity, so she had to understand what Lizard was doing.
- 5 “Pardon me, Lizard,” said Frog, “but would you please explain what you are doing?”
- 6 Lizard explained that he was trying to figure out a way to cross the river. First, he had tried building a bridge of stones, but they all sank well below the surface of the river. Now, he was trying to build a boat out of reeds.
- 7 “Why don’t you just swim?” Frog suggested. “Or run across the top of the water the way you lizards do?”
- 8 “Oh no,” said Lizard. “I am a different kind of lizard, so I don’t have those skills.”

- 9 Frog sat tall on her rock to take a closer look at Lizard . She had been sitting on her rock observing her neighbors her whole life .
- 10 “Aren’t you a basilisk lizard?” she asked .
- 11 “Yes, ma’am! I’m as green as those who came before me!” Lizard replied proudly .
- 12 “Then you should have fancy flaps on your toes,” Frog suggested, and Lizard wiggled his long, pointy toes .
- 13 “And you should have legs that go around in a complete circle,” Frog continued, and Lizard spun his leg around in a smooth circle .
- 14 “Then you are definitely a basilisk lizard, and you can walk on water!” Frog explained .
- 15 Lizard looked at his fancy toes, but he was not sure that he could do the amazing things that other lizards could do .
- 16 “Thanks for the pep talk,” said Lizard, “but I think I should be heading home now .”
- 17 Lizard returned to his tree and made the long journey up to his home branch . He found a comfortable spot on the edge of the tree limb, and from here, he could see the river below .
- 18 Lizard thought aloud, “If I can’t get across the river, I can’t escape my enemies . I have to move from the river and go somewhere I can protect myself .”
- 19 Then, from the branch behind him, Lizard heard a voice say, “Perhapssss I can ssssave you the trouble of packing your bagsssss .”

- 20 The voice belonged to Snake, Lizard’s most feared enemy! Without even thinking, Lizard threw himself from his tree branch into the river below . His light weight brought him back to the surface of the water, and he started to churn his legs in circles like a machine . Then he felt himself moving across the river’s surface as if he were on land . His speed ran out, and he fell back into the water, but he was an excellent swimmer . After a few exciting moments, he was sitting safely on the other side of the river .
- 21 “Do you believe that you can walk on water now?” came Frog’s voice from her rock .

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Now answer Numbers 1 through 4 ♦ **Base your answers on the passage**
“The Lizard and the Frog” ♦

1 ♦ Select **two** words in this sentence from the passage that help to show the meaning of the word surface .

“First, he had tried building a bridge of stones, but they all sank well below the surface of the river .” (paragraph 6)

- Ⓐ first
- Ⓑ building
- Ⓒ stones
- Ⓓ sank
- Ⓔ river

- 2❖ This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

What is the main theme of the passage?

- Ⓐ Believe in yourself.
- Ⓑ Always be prepared.
- Ⓒ Friends are important.
- Ⓓ Look for different solutions.

Part B

Which sentence from the passage supports your answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ "Lizard explained that he was trying to figure out a way to cross the river." (paragraph 6)
- Ⓑ "'Then you should have fancy flaps on your toes,' Frog suggested, and Lizard wiggled his long, pointy toes." (paragraph 12)
- Ⓒ "Lizard thought aloud, 'If I can't get across the river, I can't escape my enemies.'" (paragraph 18)
- Ⓓ "After a few exciting moments, he was sitting safely on the other side of the river." (paragraph 20)

- 3** This question has two parts .First, answer Part A .Then, answer Part B .

PartA

What does the word churn mean as it is used in this sentence from the passage? _____

“His light weight brought him back to the surface of the water, and he started to churn his legs in circles like a machine .”
(paragraph 20)

- Ⓐ to return
- Ⓑ to feel fear
- Ⓒ to move with force
- Ⓓ to chase something

Part B

Which words from the sentence support your answer in Part A?

- Ⓐ “light weight”
- Ⓑ “brought him back”
- Ⓒ “started to”
- Ⓓ “like a machine”

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- 4◆ Which detail supports the lesson of the passage?
- Ⓐ Lizard tries different ways to cross the river .
 - Ⓑ Lizard is able to cross the river when necessary .
 - Ⓒ Lizard has a talk with Frog about how to cross the river .
 - Ⓓ Lizard needs to be able to cross the river to escape his enemies .

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Read the passage “Life Underwater” and then answer Numbers 5 through 10

Life Underwater

- 1 Do you know what life is like under the waves? A coral reef is one of the best places to go because the water is warm and there are lots of fish to see . However, few humans ever visit another part of the ocean—the deep sea . It is a cold, strange world and very different from a coral reef .

Creatures of the Sea

- 2 Coral reefs are called the “rain forests of the ocean .” The largest reef in the world is the massive Great Barrier Reef, which is 1,240 miles long . Billions of corals created this . Bright colors and many shapes come alive in the sunlight that shines on the reef . Coral reefs are not far from land, and sunlight allows plants and animals to live there . The reef provides a nice, warm home for all kinds of living things . Animals called “corals” form the reef . They leave the hard part of their bodies when they die, and a large reef is made from many of these tiny body parts . Some corals form huge, round shapes, or mounds, and some form shapes that look like animal horns .
- 3 The deep sea is very different from a coral reef . The deepest part of the ocean floor is mostly flat, but there are also mountains taller than any on land . There are valleys almost seven miles deep, and the water temperature is near freezing . The weight of miles and miles of water above would easily crush a car, and yet, many types of creatures are able to live there . Huge crabs, starfish, and worms survive in the deep sea .

Ocean Life Survival

- 4 Animals on the coral reef also depend on other animals and plants to live . Small fish hide from big fish in the coral . Long and thin eels wait in the holes, shooting out and grabbing a meal . Fish scrape food off the coral with their teeth . Sea grasses offer food to turtles, crabs, and fish .
- 5 Life on the bottom of the ocean depends on “marine snow,” or tiny bits of animals and plants that sink downward from above . Giant barrel sponges six feet long eat these nonliving animals and plants . Odd animals that look like flowers also feed on this snow . There is no sunlight, so green plants cannot grow there .

Will They Have the Same Fate?

- 6 The deep ocean is very different from a coral reef . Near the ocean floor, animals survive in very cold water and without sunlight . However, ocean life everywhere might be in trouble . Coral reefs are dying off, and ocean water is getting hotter . Dirt is washing into the ocean . Perhaps only the strong creatures in the deepest and most unfriendly waters will be successful and survive .



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The Great Barrier Reef is the only living thing on Earth that can be seen from space◆

Go On 

Now answer Numbers 5 through 10. Base your answers on the passage “Life Underwater.”

5 Read this sentence from the passage .

“The largest reef in the world is the massive Great Barrier Reef, which is 1,240 miles long .”(paragraph 2)


What is the meaning of massive as it is used in this sentence?

- Ⓐ dangerous
- Ⓑ dirty
- Ⓒ hidden
- Ⓓ huge


6 How are coral reefs and the deep sea alike?

- Ⓐ Both are full of light .
- Ⓑ Both are near the ocean floor .
- Ⓒ Both are rain forests of the ocean .
- Ⓓ Both are in danger of losing ocean life .

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- 7  Fill in the bubbles to compare and contrast the traits of the deep sea and coral reefs .

	CoralReefs	DeepSea	Both
close to land	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
home for ocean life	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E	<input type="radio"/> F
water temperature near freezing	<input type="radio"/> G	<input type="radio"/> H	<input type="radio"/> I

- 8  Read these sentences from the passage .


“They leave the hard part of their bodies when they die, and a large reef is made from many of these tiny body parts . Some corals form huge, round shapes, or mounds, and some form shapes that look like animal horns .” (paragraph 2)




What do the words huge, round shapes show about a reef?

- A what it acts like
- B what it looks like
- C what it smells like
- D what it sounds like

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- 9  Fill in the bubbles to show how the photo and caption help the reader understand the passage .

	Yes	No
They show the size and shape of the Great Barrier Reef 	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B
They show an example of where underwater life exists 	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
They show the different types of creatures in different parts of the ocean 	<input type="radio"/> E	<input type="radio"/> F

- 10  What detail from the passage does the caption help to explain?

Read the passage “The Ship of the Desert” and then answer Numbers 1 through 6

The Ship of the Desert

1 Uzma stood in the long line with her father . They were far away from the front with quite a while left to wait . She leaned to the side to get a better view of the camels . They looked so large, and she wondered if it would be scary to sit on the hump of one .

2 Uzma realized that she did not know anything about camels, yet they were a big part of the history of her people .

3 “Dad?” she asked . “How did camels become so important to our culture?”

4 Uzma’s father looked at the long line in front of them and decided he had time to tell her a story . . .

5 Long ago, a man was traveling on the edge of the desert . He carried food and water on his back . The man was returning to his family from far away, but the hot sun and the heavy load he lugged made the journey difficult .

6 Suddenly, he saw a large, brown creature ahead . It bellowed at him, and the loud noise frightened him!

7 “Help! That beast wants to harm me!” he shouted, but no one was there to hear him . He ran away as fast as he could as he carried his heavy load .

8 The next day, the man came across a similar creature . This time, it was at the far end of a natural pool of water . The creature kept drinking and drinking .

9 “What kind of animal is this?” asked the man . Curious, he carefully inched closer to get a better look .

10 The creature had long, skinny legs and a long, thick neck .
Most remarkably, it had a huge hump on its back .

11 “How strange!” said the man, his voice full of wonder .

12 The third day, the man saw many more of these odd creatures .
He decided to observe them carefully to see what he could learn .
They ate plants and drank water for long periods of time . The
creatures, he learned, were quite meek and gentle .

13 The man watched the creatures as they walked over a high
sand dune . He knew the desert extended for miles and miles past
that dune .

14 “These creatures must be able to walk in the desert without
water for a long time!” he said .

15 On the fourth day, the man came across one of the gentle
giants . It was down in the sand with its eyes closed, dozing . The
man had an idea .

16 “Perhaps this creature could help me carry my load,” he said .

17 He walked up to the animal and slipped a rope around its
mouth and over its ears . Then he loaded his belongings onto the
creature’s back and slipped onto its hump .

18 The animal awoke and got to its feet . The man rode it all the
way home! His children greeted him excitedly . They too wanted to
ride the wonderful creature .

19 “Now, we can make the desert our home!” the man said happily .

20 That is how the camel came to be humans’ great helper . And
that is why we call it “The Ship of the Desert .” . . .

21 Uzma laughed at her father’s wonderful story . She was about
to ask a question but realized that they were next in line .

22 She took a deep breath as she stepped forward toward
the camel . It was an honor to meet such an important part of
her culture!

Now answer Numbers 1 through 6 ♦ **Base your answers on the passage**
“The Ship of the Desert” ♦

1 ♦ Read this sentence from the passage .

“The man was returning to his family from far away, but the hot sun and the heavy load he lugged made the journey difficult .”
(paragraph 5)

What is the meaning of lugged as it is used in this sentence?

- Ⓐ paid for
- Ⓑ searched for
- Ⓒ carried along
- Ⓓ thought about

2 ♦ What does the man in the desert think in this sentence from the passage?

““These creatures must be able to walk in the desert without water for a long time!” he said .” (paragraph 14)

- Ⓐ Camels are terrifying animals .
- Ⓑ Camels can do amazing things .
- Ⓒ There are things that people can teach camels .
- Ⓓ There is a lot that people do not know about camels .

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3 Read this sentence from the passage .

"He decided to observe them carefully to see what he could learn ." (paragraph 12)

Which word from the sentence helps the reader understand the meaning of observe?

A decided

B see


C could

D learn


4 Fill in the bubbles to show how the man in the desert feels based on what he says .

	excited	curious	scared
"Help! That beast wants to harm me!" (paragraph 7)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
"What kind of animal is this?" (paragraph 9)	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E	<input type="radio"/> F
"Now, we can make the desert our home!" (paragraph 19)	<input type="radio"/> G	<input type="radio"/> H	<input type="radio"/> I

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5  Select **two** ways the man in the desert changes .

- Ⓐ He gets stronger .
- Ⓑ He learns a lesson .
- Ⓒ He becomes braver .
- Ⓓ He tries to help others .
- Ⓔ He discovers a solution .

6  This question has two parts . First, answer Part A . Then, answer Part B .

Part A

How does Uzma change in the passage?

- Ⓐ She gains respect for something .
- Ⓑ She begins to be kind to animals .
- Ⓒ She gets confused about her history .
- Ⓓ She learns something about her father .

Part B

Fill in the bubble **before one** sentence from the passage that supports your answer in Part A .

- Ⓐ Uzma laughed at her father’s wonderful story Ⓑ She was about to ask a question but realized that they were next in line .
- Ⓒ She took a deep breath as she stepped forward toward the camel . Ⓓ It was an honor to meet such an important part of her culture! (paragraphs 21-22)

Read the passage “Miami Carnival” and then answer Numbers 7 through 10

Miami Carnival

- 1 Do you love a parade? Do you enjoy listening to music? Do you like to dance? If so, then you would love Miami Carnival!
- 2 This exciting event takes place in Florida every year . People come together in the city of Miami . They meet to celebrate Caribbean culture . The Caribbean is a group of islands south of Florida . Many Caribbean people have moved from these islands to Florida . Now, they live in cities like Miami .
- 3 Miami Carnival celebrates Caribbean traditions . There is a huge parade that lasts all day . People dress up for the parade . They wear colorful costumes with glitter and many feathers . They dance and smile as they pass . Bands play steel drums and other lively instruments, and the crowd sways along to the sound of the island music . It is a grand party!
- 4 Miami Carnival is a thrilling parade and party, but it is more than that, too . People sell island food there . You can buy corn soup from Trinidad . There is also spicy jerk chicken from Jamaica . Everyone loves the fried fish from the Bahamas, too . They are all delicious! There are also arts and crafts for sale . People love to buy island gifts for themselves and others .
- 5 Visitors come from all over to watch the parade, listen to music, eat food, and buy crafts to bring home with them . The day is devoted to island life and culture . Many children come with their families to join the fun . It is just like being on a Caribbean island!
- 6 In fact, kids love Miami Carnival so much that they have been given their own special celebration . Junior Carnival takes place in Miami one week earlier . It is a lot like Miami Carnival .

- 7 The parade in Junior Carnival includes dancers, too, but they are all children . Girls and boys dress up in fancy costumes and wear enormous feathers that are five feet tall . The dancers laugh and throw glitter on the crowd as they move past . Bands play island music, just as they do in Miami Carnival . It is a party just for kids!
- 8 Carnival is more than a party, though . It reminds Caribbean people of their history . It tells them where they came from and how they lived in the past . It is a way to keep their culture alive . Miami Carnival honors island traditions that have been passed down for years . It is also a way for families to create new traditions of their own!

Now answer Numbers 7 through 10. Base your answers on the passage “Miami Carnival.”

7 Why does the author ask questions at the beginning of the passage?

- A to get readers interested in the topic
- B to show that it is fun to try new things
- C to get more information about the topic
- D to show that readers have different interests

8 Select **two** words from the sentence that help to show the meaning of the word sways .

“Bands play steel drums and other lively instruments, and the crowd sways along to the sound of the island music .”
(paragraph 3)

- A steel
- B crowd
- C sound
- D island
- E music

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- 9  This question has two parts . First, answer Part A . Then, answer Part B .

Part A

What does the word enormous mean as it is used in this sentence from the passage? _____

“Girls and boys dress up in fancy costumes and wear enormous feathers that are five feet tall .” (paragraph 7)

- Ⓐ broken
- Ⓑ huge
- Ⓒ round
- Ⓓ strong

Part B

Which words from the sentence support your answer in Part A?

- Ⓐ “Girls and boys”
- Ⓑ “dress up”
- Ⓒ “fancy costumes”
- Ⓓ “five feet tall”

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10 ♦ What does the author want to show about Junior Carnival?
