



APRIL 20-24 2026



# 3RD GRADE ELA NEWSLETTER

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

Section: \_\_

## Reminders

**Pass 2 iReady lessons in your green lesson path by Sunday at 11:59 PM.**

Complete the attached worksheets and turn in entire packet on Friday.



## Homework:

### Monday

Read "Inventing Bubble Gum", label text features, and answer q. 1-5. Highlight your text evidence.

### Tuesday

Read "Are Animals Inventors?", and label text features.

### Wednesday

Re-read "Are Animals Inventors?" and answer questions 1-4. Highlight your text evidence.

### Thursday

Earth Day Fact Vs. Opinion

## Assessments:

- **Portfolio:**

Tuesday **AND** Wednesday

- Grammar Quiz:

Friday, 4/24

- ELA FAST PM3 May 5th

## Novel Studies

3A, 3B, 3C: Charlotte's Web  
3D: I Survived the Great Chicago Fire  
3E: Percy Jackson

# Weekly Reading Skills

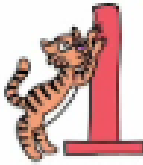
## IDENTIFY CLAIM

When you read an argumentative text, look for the claim.

- The claim is the position the author takes on a subject.
- The claim is the author's opinion.
- The claim is a statement the author tries to prove.
- The claim will come at the beginning of the text.
- The claim will solve a problem or answer a question.
- The author will include facts and evidence to prove the claim.

**Claim**

The best way to keep your cat from destroying furniture with her claws is to have a scratch post.



**Evidence**

After we bought a scratch post, Fluffy sharpened her claws on it instead of the couch.

Cats have the most interesting eyes of all the animals.



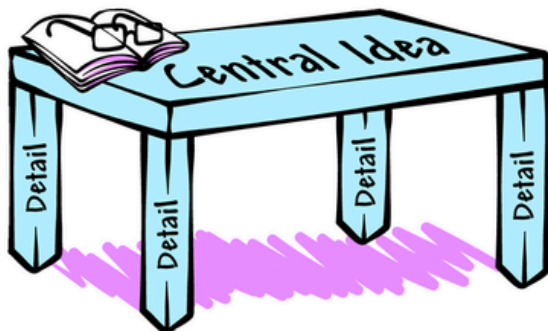
Cats' pupils are vertical slits instead of circles, like most animals' pupils.

## Central Idea

The **Central Idea** is what the text is mostly about.

Look for **text clues**.

- Headings
- Visuals
- First or Last Sentence
- Repeated Words



Evaluate **details** to determine **key ideas** that support the central idea.

- Examples
- Facts
- Evidence
- Description

## Comparison/Contrast



**Author's Purpose:** The Comparison/Contrast text structure helps authors describe how things are alike and different.

**Transition Words:** *but, both, however, and*

## Cause/Effect



**Author's Purpose:** The Cause/Effect text structure helps authors explain what happened and why it happened.

**Transition Words:** *because, so, in order to, as a result*

## TEXT STRUCTURE

Authors choose text structures that best fit their purposes for writing a text.

### Sequence



**Author's Purpose:** The Sequence text structure helps authors explain events in order.

**Transition Words:** *before, first, next, then, last, after*

### Problem/Solution



**Author's Purpose:** The Problem/Solution text structure helps authors explain how a problem is solved.

**Transition Words:** *problem, solution, difficulty, the answer is*

# Weekly Reading Skills

## TEXT FEATURES

present important parts of the story in a different way.

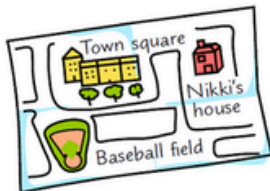
**Punctuation**, such as ellipses, em dashes, and colons, can indicate important text will follow.

Kinds of **type** can show emphasis or indicate a title.

**Boldface**  
**CAPITAL LETTERS**  
*Italic* **Large** small  
**Color**

## GRAPHIC FEATURES

are visuals, such as illustrations, diagrams, maps, and speech bubbles, that help explain ideas in the text.



## Context Clues



Good readers use **clues in the text and visuals** to find the **meanings** of unfamiliar words.

### Word Parts

Lumin = light

We stared at the **luminous** stars in the sky.

### Examples

**Crustaceans**, such as shrimp, lobster, and crabs, live in salt water.

### Definitions

The **calyx**, the leaf-like parts that cover a flower bud, are green.

### Visuals with Labels

Visuals show pictures of the word's meaning.



### Synonyms

= **same** Luke wanted to **rectify** his mistake. If he could correct it, he would.

### Antonyms

= **opposite** Ana would rather be **industrious** than lazy.

## Author's Purpose

An author's purpose is his or her reason for writing a text. Knowing the purpose helps you recognize the author's message.

If the author's purpose is to . . .

### Persuade



then the author wants readers to think or act in a certain way.

### Inform



then the author wants to share information about a topic.

### Entertain



then the author wants readers to enjoy a story.

How can you figure out the author's purpose?

**FIRST...**

think about the genre.

**THEN...**

ask questions about what you read and find answers.

# Rule 18

## Grammar

Adjectives can make comparisons.

- Use **er** to compare two people, places, or things.

Sally is **younger** than Ken.

This book is **thicker** than that book.

I want the **bigger** of the two balloons.

A hummingbird is **smaller** than a pigeon.

- Use **est** to compare three or more people, places, or things.

She is the **youngest** child in her family.

This is the **thickest** book on the shelf.

The **biggest** balloon in the bunch floated away.

Hummingbirds are the **smallest** birds on Earth.

## Comparative & Superlative Adjectives

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_ **Monday**

# Inventing Bubble Gum

By Tracy Vonder Brink  
2022

*When someone invents something it means they think of or make something new. This informational text tells the story of how bubble gum was invented.*

***As you read, take notes on how bubble gum was first made.***

- [1] Bubble gum is chewy. It's pink. It's fun! But did you know bubble gum was invented long after chewing gum?

People have loved to chew gum for 11,000 years. Prehistoric<sup>1</sup> peoples in Europe made it from the bark of birch trees. The Indigenous peoples of North America made theirs from spruce tree sap.<sup>2</sup> The ancient<sup>3</sup> Maya and Aztecs added the sap of the saponilla tree to their gum. In 1859, saponilla sap also became the base of chewing gum made in the United States. By the late 1800s, the largest chewing gum factory<sup>4</sup> in the world was in New York City.



*"Untitled" by Marlene Bauer is licensed under CC0.*

In 1906, the Flier Chewing Gum Company tried to make bubble gum. It was called Blibber Blubber. It was not very good. It was too sticky to blow a big bubble. When Walter Diemer went to work at Flier in the 1920s, the company was still trying to make bubble gum. He was an accountant, the person who looked after the company's money. Walter worked with numbers, not candy, but sometimes he was asked to watch batches<sup>5</sup> of gum as they cooked. Soon Walter wanted to make gum himself.

1. from a time before history was written
2. **Sap(noun)**the liquid that carries food and water to all parts of a plant
3. **Ancient(adjecive)**very old; from long ago
4. **Factory(noun)**a building where things are made
5. a set of something created at one time

Walter didn't mean to invent bubble gum. He was experimenting with a gum base, the part that makes the gum chewy. Walter tried different ingredients<sup>6</sup> and boiled mix after mix. One day he noticed one batch was surprisingly bubbly. Walter discovered he could blow bubbles with it. Walter had created bubble gum!

[5] When Walter tried to make it again the next morning, it didn't work. It took him four more months to create another bubbly batch. He asked the people in his company to test it. They loved blowing bubbles. Would everybody else? It was time to try it in the real world.

Walter made 300 pounds (136 kg) of his gum around Christmas in 1928. He almost forgot to add color to it. Walter grabbed the only food coloring he had. It happened to be bright pink.

The Fler Chewing Gum Company named Walter's gum Dubble Bubble. They sent five pounds of Dubble Bubble to a small candy store in Philadelphia. It cost one penny per piece. Dubble Bubble sold out right away.

Everyone wanted bubble gum. Dubble Bubble was a hit. Soon other companies made their own. Today you can find Dubble Bubble, Bazooka, Bubble Yum, and many more in stores. They're all pink, just like Walter's first bubble gum.

Walter worked for Fler for the rest of his life, and he never told anybody but his company the secret to his bubble gum recipe.<sup>7</sup> He also never made any money from his invention. He didn't seem to mind. Creating something kids loved was more important to him. In 1998, his wife told The Capital Times newspaper that Walter often said, "I've done something with my life. I've made kids happy around the world."

*"Inventing Bubble Gum" by Tracy Vonder Brink. Copyright © 2022 by CommonLit, Inc. This text is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.*

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6. one of the parts of a mix
  7. a list of ingredients and directions for making a food

# Monday

## Text-Dependent Questions



**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
  - A. The first form of bubble gum was invented thousands of years ago.
  - B. People invented chewing gum when they got tired of bubble gum.
  - C. Bubble gum was not well-liked when it was first invented.
  - D. It took many years of tests to finally invent bubble gum.
  
2. Which sentence shows that Walter was a surprising person to invent bubble gum?
  - A. "When Walter Diemer went to work at Fler in the 1920s, the company was still trying to make bubble gum." (Paragraph 3)
  - B. "He was an accountant, the person who looked after the company's money." (Paragraph 3)
  - C. "Walter discovered he could blow bubbles with it." (Paragraph 4)
  - D. "When Walter tried to make it again the next morning, it didn't work." (Paragraph 5)
  
3. In paragraph 4, "experimenting" means —
  - A. filling something
  - B. staying away from
  - C. adding up numbers
  - D. doing a careful test
  
4. What do paragraphs 7 and 8 help readers understand?
  - A. They show how Walter invented bubble gum.
  - B. They show that people liked Walter's bubble gum.
  - C. They show that people at Walter's company were smart.
  - D. They show how Fler Company failed to sell Dubble Bubble.

5. How did Walter Diemer invent bubble gum?

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

Date: **Tuesday and Wednesday**

## Are Animals Inventors?

By Gail Jarrow and Paul Sherman

2001

*Paul Sherman is a biologist, or a scientist who studies living things, and Gail Jarrow is a children's book author. They work together to write non-fiction articles for children to help them learn about the world around them. In this text, Sherman and Jarrow explain how different animals make inventions to make their lives easier. As you read, take notes on what scientists have learned about animal inventions.*

[1] You use inventions every day. For some simple ones, think of a spoon or hammer. Other inventions are complex,<sup>1</sup> such as a car or telephone. Many people think that only humans invent tools.

Not so fast. Some animals use tools, too. For example, fire ants use moss to soak up water and carry it home. Sea otters use rocks to crack open mussel shells. Does that mean that these animals are also inventors?<sup>2</sup>

Finding out isn't easy. We can't ask an otter how it knew to use a rock as a hammer. Was it born knowing this? Or did it copy another otter's invention?

Scientists often approach these questions by watching animals in nature. They have noticed that all sea otters — young and old — use rocks to break hard shells. All do it basically the same way. And all fire ants use their moss the same way, too. So tool use by otters and fire ants may be an inborn<sup>3</sup> ability.<sup>4</sup>

### The Termite<sup>5</sup> Catcher

1. having many connected parts
2. **Inventor(noun)** one who makes new things and uses them
3. within one at birth; natural

4. **Ability(noun)** skill or talent

5. a small, ant-like animal that eats wood



*"Raven bird crow feathers black" by ChiemSeherin is licensed under CC0.*

[5] For some other animals, it's a different story. Chimpanzees use a stick to catch termites. A chimp finds a branch, strips off its leaves and side branches, and breaks the stick to the ideal<sup>6</sup> length. Then it carefully pokes the tool into holes in a termite mound. The termites attack the stick. When the chimp pulls out the stick, it's covered with tasty termites. Unlike sea otters, individual chimps construct<sup>7</sup> and handle their tools differently.

There is another clue that chimps invented this tool. Young chimps learn the skill by watching older chimps. The first few times a youngster makes a probe<sup>8</sup> from a stick, the tool is crude<sup>9</sup> and doesn't work well. By practicing, the young chimps improve their tool-making skill.

## A Rodent's<sup>10</sup> Dust Mask

Scientists gather more clues about an animal's use of tools by observing<sup>11</sup> how the animal behaves in a new situation.<sup>12</sup> Dr. Paul Sherman and Gabriela Shuster used this approach with naked mole-rats. These gerbil-sized African rodents live in underground tunnels, in colonies of up to three hundred members. In Dr. Sherman's laboratory<sup>13</sup> at Cornell University, their homes are plastic tubes, in which they often gnaw holes with their large front teeth.

Before gnawing at the plastic, a mole-rat picks up a piece of wood shaving or root husk. The animal places the shaving or husk behind its front teeth. This shield<sup>14</sup> keeps plastic dust out of the rodent's throat and windpipe while it gnaws.

Did the mole-rats invent the dust mask to keep fine, irritating<sup>15</sup> plastic out of their throats? Mole-rats in several laboratories use the wood shavings the same way. This could mean that naked mole-rats are born knowing how to shield their throats whenever digging creates fine dust.

[10] But only the older mole-rats use the shavings. This could be a clue that the younger ones aren't born knowing how to use shavings as dust masks but have to learn it from their elders. That would mean at least one mole-rat invented the tool. Instinct<sup>16</sup> or invention? No one is sure yet.

6. **Ideal**(*adjective*)something or someone that is seen as perfect

7. to build; put things together

8. a tool used to explore the inside of something that cannot be seen directly

9. done in a rough way

**10. A small animal with long front teeth. Rats, mice, and hamsters are examples of rodents.**

11. **Observe**(*verb*)to watch closely

12. place

13. a place used for scientific experiments

14. something that gives protection

15. **Irritate**(*verb*)to make sore, red, or raw

16. a behavior not taught by parents; something one is born with

## A Puzzle for Ravens

Another animal tool-user is the raven. This bird collects rocks, then drops them on intruders.

Is the raven inventive? To find out, Dr. Bernd Heinrich gave ravens a problem they had never<sup>17</sup> seen before.

He tied meat to the end of a long string that was attached to a perch.<sup>18</sup> The ravens could not pull bits of the meat loose by flying and grabbing at it. The only way to eat the meat was to pull the string up to the perch. But Dr. Heinrich made the problem harder by choosing a string that was too long to be raised with one pull.

At first the ravens pecked at the string or dived at the meat. Finally, one bird sat on the perch and pulled up a short length of string with its beak. The raven used its foot to clamp<sup>19</sup> the string to the perch, which prevented the meat from falling back to its original place. The bird then used its beak to yank up another length of string. After repeating this several times, the bird could grab the meat.

Eventually, most of the other ravens pulled up the string in a similar way. Once a bird figured out the solution, it used the method perfectly every time. Because none of the ravens solved the problem immediately, Dr. Heinrich concluded that they had invented a solution.

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17. someone who enters a place without being invited
  18. a branch or bar where a bird sits
  19. **Clamp(verb)**to grip something very tightly

# Tuesday and Wednesday

## Text-Dependent Questions



**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
  - A. Animals need help from humans to hunt for food.
  - B. Humans make animals' lives easier by giving them things they need.
  - C. Some animals make inventions to help make their lives safer or easier.
  - D. Scientists notice that animals use human-made inventions to stay safe.
  
2. Based on the text, what are the authors' points of view on animals?
  - A. The authors want to help animals live longer.
  - B. The authors think that animals are smart problem solvers.
  - C. The authors think the way animals play together is interesting.
  - D. The authors hope to see more animals living happily in the wild.
  
3. What detail from the text best supports the idea that mole-rats are inventors?
  - A. "Many people think that only humans invent tools." (Paragraph 1)
  - B. "They have noticed that all sea otters — young and old — use rocks to break hard shells." (Paragraph 4)
  - C. "The animal places the shaving or husk behind its front teeth." (Paragraph 8)
  - D. "He tied meat to the end of a long string that was attached to a perch." (Paragraph 12)

4. According to the article, are animals inventors?

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Thursday

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



# Earth Day: Fact or Opinion?

## Facts

## Opinions



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About 70% of the Earth is water.

Elephants are the smartest animal that live on our planet.

About 30% of Earth is land.

North America is the best place to live.

Earth is the 5th largest planet.

Soccer is the hardest sport in the world.

Earth is estimated to be about 4.5 to 5 billion years old!

It is more fun to play in water than on land.

Earth is the 3rd planet from the sun.