"Movie Magic"

If you haven't read J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring,* wait. Peter Jackson put everything and more into the movie he made based on the books. This director is a genius. You will never feel like this movie is three hours long, and you will never be bored. Peter Jackson brings hobbits, elves, and wizards to life. He has created the most horrible monsters to crawl from the depths of Middle Earth. The special effects are out of this world. The hobbits are habit forming.

First, the super-evil sorcerer Sauron forges rings in the furnaces of Mount Doom and gives them to the rulers of Middle Earth. The rings are magical, and the rulers become ringwraiths. These ghosts of men serve Sauron because he made the One Ring to "rule them all and in the darkness bind them."

Suddenly a bloody battle between good men and evil creatures explodes on the screen. Sauron is defeated, and the ring is taken from his hacked-off hand. Then things really heat up. Soon, Frodo has the ring and is heading to dump it in Mount Doom's fires.

Frodo and his friend Sam hook up with two more hobbits, Merry and Pippin. They are all being chased by ringwraiths riding the largest, blackest, most evil-looking horses ever. They finally meet up with Gandalf the wizard, Aragorn, Boromir, Legolas the elf and Gimli the dwarf. This gang has more power than ten wrestlers like Stone Cold Steve Austin. This is not good news for the evil ones.

What happens next is so exciting you have to see it to believe it. If you are one of the few who haven't seen this movie, go now. You won't find out from me how it ends.

1. Which of these statements about Peter Jackson can be proven?
   A. He has created the most horrible monsters to crawl from the depths of Middle Earth.
   B. Peter Jackson brings hobbits, elves, and wizards to life.
   C. This director is a genius.

2. Which of the following is an opinion?
   A. The special effects are out of this world.
   B. Sauron gives the rings to the rulers of Middle Earth.
   C. The rings are magical, and the rulers become ringwraiths.

3. From reading paragraph two, you can tell that ringwraiths are _____.
   A. evil sorcerers
   B. friends of Frodo
   C. ghosts of men

4. The author wrote this movie review mainly to _____.
   A. entertain us with stories about hobbits
   B. persuade us to go see the movie
   C. explain about the history of Middle Earth

Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky in 1809. He spent less than a year in formal school. He opposed slavery, and he was elected president of the United States in 1860. He gave a famous speech called the Gettysburg Address. He was assassinated in 1865. Fun fact—as a boy he often carried an ax.
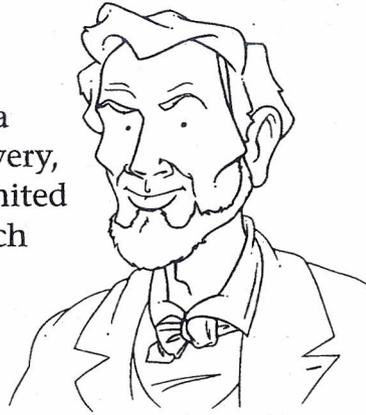
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was a famous poet born in Maine in 1807. He loved the ocean and often wrote about it. Longfellow learned French, Spanish, and Italian. He translated an important epic poem called *The Divine Comedy*. He wrote a poem called "The Children's Hour." Fun fact—he published his first poem at age thirteen.

Davy Crockett

Davy Crockett was born in Tennessee in 1786. He also spent less than a year in formal school. He was called "King of the Wild Frontier." He was elected to Congress. He said, "Be always sure you're right—then go ahead!" Davy Crockett died fighting at the Alamo. Fun fact—he was famous for hunting bears.

Clara Barton

Clara Barton was a famous nurse born in Massachusetts in 1821. Soldiers in the Civil War called her "The Angel of the Battlefield." She started the American Red Cross in 1881. She also wrote several books. Fun fact—she was the first female clerk to work in the U.S. Patent Office.

1. After reading these biographies, you can tell the word *brief* means _____.
   A. fun
   B. short
   C. male

2. What is similar about Abraham Lincoln and Davy Crockett?
   A. They both opposed slavery.
   B. Both of them gave famous speeches.
   C. They both spent less than a year in formal school.

3. Number these famous people in the order they were born.
   ___ Lincoln
   ___ Barton
   ___ Longfellow
   ___ Crockett

4. How are Longfellow and Clara Barton alike?
   A. Both of them wrote about angels.
   B. Both of them were writers.
   C. They were about the same age.

Journal Entry

October 26, 2002

Today a new boy named Nkrumah joined our class. He's from Ghana, a country on the west coast of Africa. I was amazed that he spoke English, until he said English was Ghana's official language. He taught our math class how to play the world's oldest game—an African counting game called *mankala* that is over 3,000 years old! Nkrumah said boys and girls play separately. The boys cheered, but Mrs. Tromba said our class had to play together.

Nkrumah showed us the mankala game board he had carved himself from hardwood. People in Africa carry their boards everywhere with them. Nkrumah's board had hinges so it could fold. When he opened his board, it had twelve cups with a larger cup called a kalaha at each end.

Nkrumah taught us how to make our own board from an egg carton with its lid cut off and a paper cup stapled to each end. Nkrumah's playing pieces were 48 cowrie shells—brightly colored snail shells he had gathered from the Gulf of Guinea. We used beans for ours.

Two people play on each board, so we divided into pairs. Each player takes twenty-four beans. The egg carton sits between you, with six cups facing each player. You put four beans into each of the six cups. Your kalaha is on the right.

If you're first, you start by scooping all four pieces from any cup on your side. Then, moving to the right, you drop one piece into each cup after the empty one. If you come to your kalaha, drop a piece in it. If you still have pieces left, put them in the other player's cups. But don't put one in the other player's kalaha. If your last piece lands in your kalaha, you get to go again. If it lands in your friend's cup, and the cup has two or more pieces, you capture those pieces and put them in your kalaha. If the cup right before has two or three, you also capture those. Then it's your friend's turn.

The game is over when one side's cups are empty. The winner is the one with the most pieces. We had so much fun, no one wanted math to end.

Reading Comprehension

1. Which of these is one thing a mankala board and an egg carton have in common?
   A. Both are made of wood.
   B. Both have twelve cups.
   C. Both have hinges.

2. Number these steps in the order they are done.
   ___ It's your friend's turn.
   ___ If your last piece lands in your friend's cup, and it has two or more pieces in it, you capture them.
   ___ You scoop all four pieces from one cup.
   ___ Going to the right, you drop one piece into each cup.

3. What did Nkrumah use for playing pieces?
   A. cowrie shells
   B. beans
   C. paper cups
   D. eggs

4. A good title for this journal entry might be _____.
   A. "The Boy from Ghana"
   B. "Math Class Is Fun"
   C. "The World's Oldest Game"
   D. "How to Make a Mankala Board"

It's a Butterfly! It's a Moth!
No, It's ...

Read the following chart that describes ways that butterflies and moths are alike and different.

Characteristics	Butterfly	Moth
15,000 different species		X
250,000 different species	X	
Active by day	X	
Active by night		X
Wings often dull in color		X
Wings often brightly colored	X	
Caterpillars when young	X	X
Plant eaters	X	X
Wings have tiny, overlapping scales	X	X
Have thin, nonfurry bodies	X	
Have plump, hairy bodies		X
Live wherever plants do	X	X
Antennae are feathery or fern-like		X
Antennae are thin with clubbed ends	X	
Holds its wings at its side at rest		X
Folds its wings above its body at rest	X	
Caterpillar can cause damage to crops	X	X
Caterpillar spends most of its time eating	X	X

Reading Comprehension

Which of these statements tells one way that butterflies and moths are different?
A. Only moths have plump, hairy bodies.
B. Butterflies are plant eaters.
C. A moth's wings have tiny, overlapping scales.

Which of the following is true?
A. Both moths and butterflies are caterpillars when young.
B. Butterflies and moths are alike in more ways than they're different.
C. Moths are just like butterflies, except they are not as colorful.

What is one way that moths and butterflies are the same?
A. They both have feathery antennae.
B. They are both active by night.
C. They both eat plants.
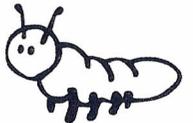
What are three characteristics that butterflies and moths have in common?
A. They are plant eaters, have thin antennae with clubbed ends, and spend most of their time eating.
B. They are caterpillars when young, their wings have overlapping scales, and they live wherever plants do.
C. There are 250,000 different kinds, they are active by day, and they have thin, nonfurry bodies.