

Name: _____

Date: _____

Why Do Leaves Change Color?

Grades 3-4

Nonfiction

- 1 Every autumn, many trees trade their green leaves for shades of yellow, orange and red. It looks like magic, but it is really science.
- 2 Leaves are green because they are full of a pigment called chlorophyll. A pigment is a substance that gives something its color. Chlorophyll helps the tree use sunlight, water and air to make food. This process is called photosynthesis.
- 3 Leaves also contain yellow and orange pigments. During spring and summer, there is so much green chlorophyll that these colors are hidden.
- 4 In autumn, the days get shorter and cooler. Many trees stop making chlorophyll and get ready to rest for the winter. As the green fades away, the yellow and orange colors that were there all along finally show.
- 5 Some trees, like certain maples, also make new red and purple pigments in the fall. That is why some forests glow bright red.
- 6 Soon, the tree seals off each leaf where it joins the branch. The leaf dries out and falls to the ground, and the tree waits for spring.

Draw something you learned from this text.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Questions: Why Do Leaves Change Color?

Read the passage again if you need to. Circle the best answer.

1. What is chlorophyll?

- ☐ a A green pigment in leaves
- ☐ c A type of soil

- ☐ b A kind of tree
- ☐ d A red flower

2. Why can't we see yellow and orange in summer leaves?

- ☐ a They are not there yet
- ☐ c The sun is too bright

- ☐ b Too much green chlorophyll hides them
- ☐ d Rain washes them away

3. What happens to the days in autumn?

- ☐ a They get longer and hotter
- ☐ c They stay the same

- ☐ b They get shorter and cooler
- ☐ d They get rainier

4. In the text, what does "pigment" mean?

- ☐ a A type of leaf
- ☐ c A tree's food

- ☐ b A substance that gives something its color
- ☐ d A season

5. Explain in your own words why leaves turn yellow in autumn.

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Secret Garden Club

Grades 3-4

Fiction

- 1 Behind Oak Street School there was an empty corner of the playground that nobody used. It was full of weeds, broken pots and one crooked bench.
- 2 Amir noticed it every day at recess. "That corner could be a garden," he told his friends, Rosa and Theo. Theo shrugged. "It's just dirt and weeds."
- 3 But Amir had an idea. He asked his teacher, Ms. Obi, if the class could fix up the corner. She smiled and said they could try, as long as they did the work themselves.
- 4 For three weeks, the friends spent every recess pulling weeds. Their hands got blisters, and Theo complained about the heat. Some classmates laughed and called them "the Weed Club."
- 5 Slowly, the corner changed. Rosa's grandmother gave them seeds for sunflowers and beans. Amir painted the old pots bright colors. Even Theo built a little sign that said "Secret Garden Club."
- 6 By June, the sunflowers were taller than the fence. Kids who had laughed now asked if they could join. Amir grinned and handed them each a watering can.

Draw your favorite part of the story.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Questions: The Secret Garden Club

Read the passage again if you need to. Circle the best answer.

1. Where was the empty corner?

- ☐ a In a park
- ☐ c At Rosa's house

- ☐ b Behind Oak Street School
- ☐ d Next to the library

2. Who gave the friends seeds?

- ☐ a Ms. Obi
- ☐ c Rosa's grandmother

- ☐ b Theo's father
- ☐ d A neighbor

3. At first, how did Theo feel about the idea?

- ☐ a Excited
- ☐ c Angry

- ☐ b Doubtful
- ☐ d Scared

4. What is the theme of the story?

- ☐ a Gardens need rain
- ☐ c Recess is too short

- ☐ b Hard work can change things and bring people together
- ☐ d Sunflowers grow fast

5. How did the other students change from the beginning to the end of the story?

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Amazing Octopus

Grades 3-4

Nonfiction

- 1 The octopus may be one of the most unusual animals in the ocean. It has eight long arms covered with suction cups that help it grab food and feel its way around.
- 2 An octopus has no bones at all. Because its body is soft, it can squeeze through tiny cracks, as long as its hard beak fits. This helps it escape from danger and hide in small spaces.
- 3 Octopuses are masters of disguise. Special cells in their skin let them change color in less than a second. Some can even change the texture of their skin to look bumpy like a rock or smooth like sand.
- 4 If a predator gets too close, an octopus can squirt a cloud of dark ink into the water. While the enemy is confused, the octopus zooms away.
- 5 Inside, an octopus is surprising too. It has three hearts and blue blood.
- 6 Scientists also think octopuses are very clever. In aquariums, some have learned to open jars and solve puzzles to reach a snack.

Draw something you learned from this text.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Questions: The Amazing Octopus

Read the passage again if you need to. Circle the best answer.

1. How many arms does an octopus have?

- ☐ a Six
- ☐ c Ten

- ☐ b Eight
- ☐ d Twelve

2. How can an octopus fit through tiny cracks?

- ☐ a It has no bones
- ☐ c It uses its ink

- ☐ b It is very small
- ☐ d It changes color

3. Why does an octopus squirt ink?

- ☐ a To find food
- ☐ c To clean the water

- ☐ b To confuse a predator and escape
- ☐ d To talk to other octopuses

4. What is the main idea of this text?

- ☐ a Octopuses have many amazing features
- ☐ c Octopuses eat snacks

- ☐ b Octopuses live in aquariums
- ☐ d Octopuses are fish

5. Name two ways an octopus can hide or protect itself.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Maya's Science Fair Surprise

Grades 3-4

Fiction

- 1 Maya had worked on her science fair project for a month. She wanted to find out which kind of paper towel soaked up the most water. She tested five brands and wrote every result in her notebook.
- 2 The night before the fair, Maya glued her charts onto a big poster board. She was proud of her bar graph, which she had colored carefully with markers.
- 3 In the morning, disaster struck. Her little brother, Leo, had knocked over his juice. A purple puddle covered half of her poster, and the graph was ruined.
- 4 Maya wanted to cry. Instead, she took a deep breath and grabbed her notebook. All of her results were still there, safe and dry.
- 5 She quickly drew a new graph on a clean sheet of paper. Then she had an idea. She taped a piece of each paper towel under the graph and added a note: "Real-life test: my brother's juice!"
- 6 At the fair, the judges laughed at her note and asked lots of questions. Maya explained every step. When the awards were announced, she won second place, and Leo cheered the loudest.

Draw your favorite part of the story.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Questions: Maya's Science Fair Surprise

Read the passage again if you need to. Circle the best answer.

1. What was Maya testing?

- ☐ a Which plant grows fastest
- ☐ c Which juice tastes best

- ☐ b Which paper towel soaks up the most water
- ☐ d Which marker lasts longest

2. What ruined Maya's poster?

- ☐ a Rain
- ☐ c Spilled juice

- ☐ b Her dog
- ☐ d A broken marker

3. Why were Maya's results safe?

- ☐ a She wrote them in her notebook
- ☐ c She remembered them

- ☐ b Her teacher had a copy
- ☐ d They were on the computer

4. Which word best describes Maya?

- ☐ a Careless
- ☐ c Calm and creative

- ☐ b Lazy
- ☐ d Shy

5. How did Maya turn a problem into a good idea?

Reading Comprehension: Answer Key

Why Do Leaves Change Color?

1. a) A green pigment in leaves
2. b) Too much green chlorophyll hides them
3. b) They get shorter and cooler
4. b) A substance that gives something its color
5. Sample answer: Trees stop making green chlorophyll, so the yellow pigments that were hidden all along can be seen.

The Secret Garden Club

1. b) Behind Oak Street School
2. c) Rosa's grandmother
3. b) Doubtful
4. b) Hard work can change things and bring people together
5. Sample answer: At first they laughed and called the friends the Weed Club, but at the end they wanted to join the garden club.

The Amazing Octopus

1. b) Eight
2. a) It has no bones
3. b) To confuse a predator and escape
4. a) Octopuses have many amazing features
5. Sample answer: It can change color and skin texture to blend in, and it can squirt ink to confuse a predator.

Maya's Science Fair Surprise

1. b) Which paper towel soaks up the most water
2. c) Spilled juice
3. a) She wrote them in her notebook
4. c) Calm and creative
5. Sample answer: She used the juice spill as a real-life test and added paper towel samples and a funny note, which the judges liked.