

Grade 3 Reading Authentic OAT Questions

Acquisition of Vocabulary

1. **She's** the principal of the school.

She's is a contraction for which words?

- ☐ A. She was
- ☐ B. She is
- ☐ C. She knows

2. The boys were **unable** to reach the cookies.

What does **unable** mean in this sentence?

- ☐ A. very able
- ☐ B. not able
- ☐ C. somewhat able

3. What word is a synonym for **stop**?

- ☐ A. skip
- ☐ B. end
- ☐ C. leave

4. What word is an antonym for **noisy**?

- ☐ A. drum
- ☐ B. praise
- ☐ C. quiet

5. Which definition of **good** is used in the sentence below?

good (gōōd)	<i>adj.</i> 1. excellent, fine <i>adj.</i> 2. kind, friendly <i>adj.</i> 3. well behaved, proper
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That movie was really **good**, so I think you should see it.

- ☐ A. definition 1: excellent, fine
 - ☐ B. definition 2: kind, friendly
 - ☐ C. definition 3: well behaved, proper
6. What word is an antonym for **cool**?
- ☐ A. warm
 - ☐ B. mild
 - ☐ C. damp
7. The student **misbehaved** in class.
What does the word **misbehaved** mean?
- ☐ A. behaved well
 - ☐ B. behaved quietly
 - ☐ C. behaved badly

8. **Who's** going home on the bus?
Who's is a contraction for which words?
- ☐ A. Who will be
 - ☐ B. Who likes
 - ☐ C. Who is
9. He felt **helpless** when his brother cried.
What does **helpless** mean in this sentence?
- ☐ A. not able to help
 - ☐ B. able to help
 - ☐ C. willing to help
10. Robin had to unload the bags from the car.
What does Robin have to do with the bags?
- ☐ A. move the bags to another part of the car
 - ☐ B. put the bags into the car
 - ☐ C. take the bags out of the car
11. Choose the correct word to complete the sentence below.
When Eric won first prize, he said, "I am the _____ boy in the whole world!"
- ☐ A. lucky
 - ☐ B. luckier
 - ☐ C. luckiest

12. **It's** time for bed now.

It's is a contraction for which words?

- ☐ A. It will be
- ☐ B. It is
- ☐ C. It was

13. What word is an antonym for **huge**?

- ☐ A. hard
- ☐ B. even
- ☐ C. tiny

14. Which definition of **note** is used in the sentence below?

<p>note (nōt) <i>n.</i> 1. a short letter to someone <i>n.</i> 2. a sound in music that you can play or sing <i>v.</i> 3. point out or notice</p>
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When I practice the violin, I can hear each **note**.

- ☐ A. definition 1: a short letter to someone
 - ☐ B. definition 2: a sound in music that you can play or sing
 - ☐ C. definition 3: point out or notice
15. What word is an antonym for **chilly**?
- ☐ A. calm
 - ☐ B. warm
 - ☐ C. dark

16. Which sentence tells about something that happened in the past?
- ☐ A. She hops down the sidewalk.
 - ☐ B. We hop to the music.
 - ☐ C. He hopped into the car.

John Glenn Reading Passage Questions

17. These are sentences from the selection.

“He blasted off on the space shuttle Discovery for a 9-day journey. One of the things he tested was how **weightlessness** affects older people.”

What does the word **weightlessness** mean?

- ☐ A. weighing too much
- ☐ B. weighing almost nothing
- ☐ C. having weak muscles

Ring! Ring! Reading Passage Questions

18. This is a sentence from the selection.

“Allie and Amy **burst** out of their doors together.”

What does **burst** mean in the sentence?

- ☐ A. They walked slowly out their doors.
- ☐ B. They hurried out of their doors.
- ☐ C. They both broke their doors.

Rabbits, Rabbits, and More Rabbits Reading Passage Questions

19. This sentence is from the selection.

“Rabbits get around by using their **powerful** hind legs.”

What word means the same as **powerful**?

- ☐ A. weak
- ☐ B. large
- ☐ C. strong

The Red Woolen Blanket Reading Passage Questions

20. This sentence is from the selection.

“She slept in her special cot wrapped tight as a **parcel**.”

What is another word for **parcel**?

- ☐ A. puppy
- ☐ B. package
- ☐ C. doll

Smell Reading Passage Questions

21. This sentence is from the selection.

“Some smells are **sweet** . . .”

Which word is an opposite of **sweet**?

- ☐ A. sour
- ☐ B. clean
- ☐ C. old

Homegrown Tomatoes Reading Passage Questions

22. This is a sentence from the selection.

“Mario liked the feel of the **moist**, rich soil.”

Which word means the opposite of **moist**?

- ☐ A. dark
- ☐ B. dry
- ☐ C. warm

The Spelling Bee Reading Passage Questions

23. This is a sentence from the selection.

“I was **thrilled**. I had never won a trophy before.”

Which word means the opposite of **thrilled**?

- ☐ A. disappointed
- ☐ B. confused
- ☐ C. excited

They're Here! Reading Passage Questions

24. This is a sentence from the selection.

“Joey carried her pail to the living room and **settled** into the window seat to watch for Gramp and Grandma.”

What does the word **settled** mean?

- ☐ A. got bored
- ☐ B. got comfortable
- ☐ C. got tired

Monkey Business Reading Passage Questions

25. This sentence is from the selection.

“They can **leap** from tree to tree ... ”

What word means the same as **leap**?

- ☐ A. jump
- ☐ B. drop
- ☐ C. walk

Thomas Edison Reading Passage Questions

26. These sentences are from the selection.

“In 1868, Thomas received his first **patent**. It was for an electric voting machine. A **patent** is a special paper that proves that the invention is the inventor’s and no one else’s.”

A **patent** tells people that

- ☐ A. an invention belongs to you.
- ☐ B. they can copy your invention.
- ☐ C. others can use your invention.

Dardanella Reading Passage Questions

27. These sentences are from the selection.

“Dardanella sighed. What else *could* she do? So the next day, she gathered her drawings and **trudged** to school.”

What does **trudged** mean in the sentence above?

- ☐ A. walked slowly
- ☐ B. skipped happily
- ☐ C. marched proudly

28. These sentences are from the selection.

"Dardanella got shoes and a costume and went to the lessons. But she found it **firesome** to do the same movements again and again."

Which word is a synonym for **firesome**?

- ☐ A. exciting
- ☐ B. boring
- ☐ C. easy

Wiggles Reading Passage Questions

29. These sentences are from the selection.

"Donnie walked on along a lane and wondered.

Could Wiggles be these butterflies **hovering** over the clover?"

What is the meaning of the word **hovering**?

- ☐ A. sitting
- ☐ B. floating
- ☐ C. hopping

The Spelling Bee



I had butterflies in my stomach all morning. Now, it was almost my turn. My palms got sweaty as I waited. I took a deep breath and looked straight ahead. I could do this. I knew I could. I heard my name called. I stood up and walked to the microphone. I took one last deep breath, and then I listened carefully to the announcer's voice.

"Your final word is 'educate,'" the announcer said. "Educate."

At that moment I knew I had won. I stared out into the crowd to find my parents. I looked until I found my parents among a room full of faces. I spoke clearly into the microphone, repeated the word, and then spelled it. My parents leaped out of their seats and began clapping excitedly. My school's principal ran up onto the stage to give me her congratulations. The announcer brought over a trophy. It had a plaque that said, "Spelling Bee Champion, 2002." I was thrilled. I had never won a trophy before. As soon as I could, I raced off the stage to find my parents. It only took a minute, since they were rushing toward me as well.

"Well, Rob, I guess all that studying really paid off!" said Dad.

"We are so proud of you!" exclaimed Mom. I just stood there holding my trophy and beaming. I couldn't think of a time when I had ever been happier.

Ring! Ring!

from "Rockin' Reptiles" by Stephanie Calmenson and
Joanna Cole



Ring! Ring! Early one morning the telephone rang at Allie Gator's house. Allie's father answered it.

"It's for you, Allie," he called. "It's Amy." "I knew that!" said Allie. She jumped out of bed and ran for the phone.

Allie and Amy were best friends. They lived in apartment buildings next door to each other. When they were not together, they were talking on the phone.

"Quick, look out your window," said Amy. "Look what it says on that truck outside."

Allie looked out. "I can't read it," she said. "I don't have my glasses on."

"It says Moving Van. And look what they're unloading," said Amy.

"I can't see it. Everything is fuzzy," said Allie.

"Please put your glasses on. This is important!" said Amy.

Allie ran and put on her glasses. She looked out the window. She saw the movers taking a bed out of the truck. On the headboard, in big letters, it said GRACIE. A bulletin board resting on the sidewalk said GRACIE, too. So did the toy chest.

"It looks like a girl is moving into your building," said Amy.

As Allie jumped into her clothes, her head was swimming with questions. I wonder if Gracie is nice. I wonder if she likes jumping rope. Allie and Amy burst out of their doors together. The movers were taking more and more stuff out of the van.

Just then a car pulled up to the curb. Behind the wheel was a lady alligator. A skinny alligator girl was sitting next to her. She had braces on her teeth. Her T-shirt had big letters across the front. The big letters spelled out GRACIE.

The girl opened the car door and jumped out.

"Hi. I am Gracie," she said.

Amy said, "Hi. I'm Amy, and this is Allie. Welcome to Swamp Street."

Rabbits, Rabbits and More Rabbits

by Gail Gibbons



There are wild rabbits and tame rabbits. Tame rabbits can be gentle and loving pets.

The two most common kinds of wild rabbits are cottontail rabbits and European common rabbits. Wild rabbits live on every continent except Antarctica. All tame rabbits are **descendants** of European common rabbits.

There are big rabbits and small rabbits. Their heads can be pointed and narrow or broad and flat. Wild rabbits have short brownish fur. **Domestic** rabbits have short or long fur that can be white, black, gray, reddish, brown or a mixture of these colors. Their fur keeps them warm.

Hop . . . hop . . . hop! Rabbits get around by using their powerful hind legs. They can also run as fast as 18 miles an hour. Many can leap 10 feet or more.

A rabbit depends most of all on its excellent hearing. It moves its ears together or one at a time to catch the sounds coming from any direction.

Rabbits can see better in the dark than people. A rabbit's eyes are on the sides of its head. Because of this, it can see on both sides as well as to the front and back. A rabbit has a good sense of smell, too. Its nose wiggles constantly as it sniffs to identify any scents.

Rabbits are vegetarians. That means they don't eat meat. In the spring and summer months, wild rabbits eat leafy plants. Biting and chewing helps wear down their front teeth, which grow continuously. During the winter months, they live on bark, twigs and the old fruit of bushes and trees. Rabbits are nocturnal. They eat and play most of the night from dusk to dawn. During the day they rest and sleep.

A well-cared-for pet rabbit can live eight to twelve years. In the wild a rabbit may live to be about five years old. A male rabbit is called a buck. A female rabbit is called a doe.

Baby rabbits are called kits or kittens. They are born with their eyes closed and without any fur. To keep them warm the mother covers them with grass and bits of her fur in the nest she has dug in the ground. At about a week old, the kits have opened their eyes and grown a coat of soft fur.

When they are about two weeks old, the kits leave their nest. Their mother only **nurses** them for the first few weeks of their lives. Then they begin to find their own food. When they are about six months old they begin to raise their own young.

It's fun to adopt a baby rabbit or a grown rabbit for your own pet, but you must allow time to take care of it.

Rabbits are lots of fun to watch in their natural environment. But, best of all, rabbits are fun to play with. They are wonderful pets that require lots of care, attention and love.

Word Bank
<p>descendants—coming from the same parents or ancestors</p> <p>domestic—tame</p> <p>nurses—to feed babies</p>

The Red Woolen Blanket

by Bob Graham



Julia had her own blanket right from the start.

Julia was born in the winter. She slept in her special cot wrapped tight as a parcel.

She had a band of plastic on her wrist with her name on it.

"She's as bald as an egg," said her father, helping himself to another chocolate.

Julia came home from the hospital with her new red blanket, a bear, a gray woolen dog and a plastic duck.

Waiting at home for her were a large pair of pants with pink flowers and a beautiful blue jacket specially knitted by her grandmother.

"Isn't blue for boys?" asked her father.

"No, it doesn't really matter," said her mom.

Inside, under the red woolen blanket, Julia slept in her own basket.

Outside, snugly wrapped, she smiled in the watery winter sunshine.

Nothing worried Julia.

Julia grew. She slept in a cot and sucked and chewed the corners of her not-so-new blanket.

She rubbed the red woolen blanket gently against her nose.

Julia's mom carried her to the shops in a pack on her back. The pack was meant to carry the shopping.

Julia liked it so much up there that the stroller was used for the shopping and the pack was used for Julia.

Then Julia was crawling and climbing. Her blanket went with her.

It was chewed and soiled.

Some of it was left behind, some went up the vacuum cleaner, and some of it was walked all over.

Sometimes Julia made her own small room with the blanket. On the inside it was pink and cozy.

On the outside it was pink and lumpy. It scared the dog.

Wherever Julia went her blanket went too.

In the spring, and when it was hot; in the autumn, and when it rained.

Julia got bigger. Her blanket got smaller.

A sizable piece was lost under the lawnmower.

"If Julia ran off deep into a forest," said her father, "she could find her way back by the blanket threads left behind."

The day that Julia started school, she had a little blanket not much bigger than a postage stamp—because no one else brought a whole blanket to school . . . except Billy, who used his blanket as a "Lone Avenger's" cape.

Sometime during Julia's first day at school, she lost the last threads of her blanket.

It may have been while playing in the school yard . . . or having her lunch under the trees.

It could have been anywhere at all . . . but now that she was growing up she hardly missed it.

Smell

by Mandy Suhr



Close your eyes and sniff the air. What can you smell?

There are thousands of different kinds of smells. Some smells are sweet . . . and some smells are stale. Some things are nice to smell . . . but some are not so nice! Some smells can make you feel hungry. But sometimes, being able to smell is not such a good thing!

Smells are made of tiny **particles**. They float in the air and are so small that you can't see them. When you breathe, these tiny particles go into your nose. They **cling** to the sticky mucus that is inside your nose.

Under the **mucus** are special **smell detectors**. They collect the particles. The particles stick to the smell detectors, which send messages to your brain. These messages help your brain to figure out what kind of smell you are smelling.

All your senses work together, but smell and taste are special partners. When you smell something, it helps you to figure out what the taste will be like. When you have a cold, you can't smell very well. This is because your nose is blocked. Often you can't tell what things taste like either.

Some animals are really good at smelling. Dogs can find things just by smelling the **scent** that is left behind where something or someone has been. This is why dogs are often used to help find missing people.

Being able to smell can sometimes warn you of danger. Often you can smell things you might not be able to see, like gas or something burning.

What is your favorite smell?

Word Bank
cling —to hold together
mucus —sticky stuff produced especially by mucous membranes (as of the nose and throat), that moisten and protect
particles —pieces
scent —a smell
smell detectors —something that senses different smells

Directions: Read the selection.

John Glenn



Astronaut and U.S. Senator John Glenn was born in Cambridge, Ohio. He grew up in New Concord, Ohio. At an early age, John showed an interest in science and flying.

John Glenn learned to fly planes when he was in college. After college, he joined the Navy and became a fighter pilot. During two wars, John received many medals for his brave service. One time, John's plane was hit in the tail by enemy fire. He almost crashed, but John used all his skill to return to the airport safely.

After the wars, John Glenn spent his days flying new types of aircraft. In 1957, he set a **transcontinental** record by flying across the continent in 3 hours and 23 minutes. To go that fast, he had to travel at the speed of sound nearly the entire time.

In 1959, John Glenn was chosen to be one of our country's first astronauts in Project Mercury. The goal of the project was to put a man in space.

John made history by becoming the first American to **orbit** Earth. He circled Earth three times in his space capsule called Friendship 7. He was 162 miles high in space and traveled at 17,500 miles per hour. The flight lasted almost 5 hours from launch to splashdown.

In 1974, John Glenn was elected U.S. senator. For the next 24 years he served the people of Ohio in our nation's capital, Washington, D.C. As a senator, John helped pass some important laws. He even ran for president in 1984.

John Glenn made space history again 36 years after he first orbited Earth. In 1998, at the age of 77, John became the oldest person to travel into space. He blasted off on the space shuttle Discovery for a 9-day journey. One of the things he tested was how weightlessness affects older people. John Glenn is a hero for Ohio and our entire nation. We are very proud of him.

Word Bank
Astronaut —a person who travels in space
orbit —to circle around
transcontinental —across the continent

Directions: Read the selection.

Homegrown Tomatoes



Everyone knew that Mario's Uncle Joe grew the best tomatoes in town. On Tuesday, Uncle Joe said, "Are you ready to become a gardener? Let's get started." They went out to the sunny patch of soil behind the garage. Mario and his uncle dug up the soil and raked it smooth the day before.

"First, we need to dig a deep hole to bury the roots of the tomato plant," said Uncle Joe.

Mario took the shovel. He followed Uncle Joe's directions carefully. "Now, fill the hole with water. Let the water soak in so that the roots will be moist." Mario watched as the water disappeared.

Next, Uncle Joe took a plant from a bucket. He handed it to Mario. "Put the roots at the bottom of the hole. Cover them with dirt." Mario liked the feel of the moist, rich soil.

The next few days were very sunny. Then, on Friday, it rained very hard. Mario was worried about his little plant!

The next morning, the plant was bent over. It was lying in the mud. Mario thought his plant was sick. Uncle Joe just laughed. Mario watched as Uncle Joe put a stick into the ground. Then he lifted the stem off the ground. He tied the stem to the stick so that it would stand up straight.

In just a few days, the light from the sun made the plant healthy and strong again.

Soon, Mario saw some yellow flower buds growing from his plant. Uncle Joe came over to take a look.

"It won't be long now," said Uncle Joe.

Weeks later, Mario saw small green tomatoes hanging from the leafy plant. Finally, one hot sunny day, he saw red, fat, juicy tomatoes.

With excited smiles, Mario and Uncle Joe picked their delicious homegrown tomatoes. It was time for lunch!

Directions: Read the selection.

They're Here!

from "Joey's Way" by Kate Aver



As soon as Joey woke up on Saturday she remembered. Gramp and Grandma are coming today, she thought.

She jumped up, dressed quickly, and got out the shiny, red pail she collected treasures in. Carefully, she took everything out: her best, unbroken crayons; wildflowers Grandma had pressed in wax paper; one bright, blue feather; and a plastic bag with shiny grains of white sand in it. She put them all on her desk, then hurried down the hall.

Her mom was in the kitchen packing food for a weekend getaway with friends. She hugged Joey. "What an early bird you are," she said.

"When are Gramp and Grandma coming?" Joey asked.

"Not for a couple more hours," Mom told her.

"Ohhh," Joey groaned.

After breakfast, Joey's big brother, Sam, headed for the family room. "Come on, let's watch cartoons while we wait for Gramp and Grandma," he said.

"Okay," Joey's big sister, Beth, agreed. "You coming, Joey?"

"Not right now," she answered.

Joey carried her pail to the living room and settled into the window seat to watch for Gramp and Grandma. After a while she saw their station wagon pull into the driveway.

"They're here! They're here!" she yelled as she hurried to the front door. Sam and Beth were right behind her, and they all greeted Gramp and Grandma.

"Look at you three," Gramp said in his big, deep voice. "I think you've each grown about a foot since we saw you in the summer!"

The children helped Gramp and Grandma bring in their bags. "Are we going somewhere this time, Gramp?" Joey asked.

"You bet," he said.

"Where?" Joey wanted to know.

"Let's keep it a surprise for now," he answered with a wink.

Gramp and Grandma visited with Mom until it was time for her to leave. "Now you be good for Gramp and Grandma," she told the children, "and I'll see you tomorrow night."

After their mom left, they helped Grandma pack a snack and went out to the car. Sam climbed in first and sat in the back by the

window. Beth got in and sat by the other window. Joey got in last and climbed over into the front seat with Gramp. She turned around and grinned.

"Hey! You can't sit up there, Joey," Sam complained.

"Yeah," agreed Beth, "you're supposed to sit back here with us."

Grandma climbed in the back. "That's okay," she said. "Let Joey ride up front awhile. I'd like to sit with you two, anyway."

Gramp started the car. "Now will you tell us where we're going, Gramp?" Joey asked.

"I'll sing you a hint," said Gramp. "See if you can guess."

His deep voice began . . . "Oh, I'll take you back to that place in the trees, where Autumn is painted on all of the leaves"

"Sounds like the woods to me," Joey guessed.

"Right! Good guess, Joey."

Joey looked down at her pail.

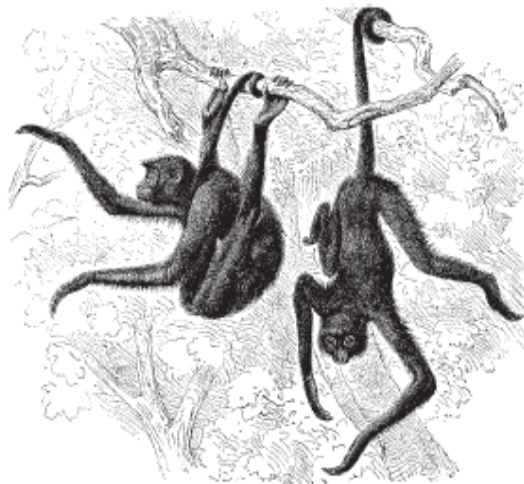
"Gramp?" she asked. "Do you think I'll find treasures there?"

"I'm sure you will, Joey. The woods are full of treasures."

Directions: Read the selection.

Monkey Business

by Judy Ling



Monkey Homes

Monkeys come in all shapes, sizes, and colors. There are nearly 200 different kinds of monkeys, and they live in many of the world's forests and grasslands. Most monkeys spend their entire lives up in the trees. They have long arms and are good at climbing. They can leap from tree to tree, high above the ground. Other monkeys, such as baboons, live on the ground. They walk around on their hands and feet.

Monkey Bodies

Monkeys' fingers and toes are long and strong, which help them grip branches as they climb. They use their fingers to hold food as they eat. Monkeys' feet look a lot like their hands, and their big toes are often just like thumbs. Most monkeys have long tails. Their tails help them balance. Some monkeys, such as spider monkeys and woolly monkeys, can use their tails to swing from tree to tree. Monkeys are

intelligent animals. Their eyes face forward, and most have good eyesight. They can hear well, too.

Monkey Meals

Monkeys spend a lot of time looking for food. Most monkeys eat almost anything: leaves, grass, fruit, nuts, birds, frogs, and other small animals. Some monkeys even fish for crabs.

Monkey Families

All monkeys live in groups. Some monkeys live in small family groups. Some monkeys live in large groups called troops. While resting, monkeys groom each other. **Grooming** is one way that monkeys care for each other.

Monkey Talk

If you were to visit a rain forest, you would hear “monkey talk.” Monkeys call to each other to keep in touch with their group. They call to warn each other of **intruders** or **predators**. Monkeys communicate by making sounds, clapping their hands, and jumping up and down.

Word Bank
grooming — cleaning or caring for
intelligent — clever or smart
intruders — those who come or go in without invitation
predators — animals that live by killing and eating other animals

Directions: Read the selection.

Thomas Edison

by John Kennedy



Thomas Edison was born in 1847 in Milan, Ohio. As a child, Thomas was curious about many things. He always wondered how things worked. When he was 10 years old, Thomas set up a **laboratory** in his basement so he could do science experiments.

Thomas had his first job when he was 12 years old. He rode the train and sold newspapers and candy to the passengers. One day at work, Thomas saved a little boy from being run over by a train. To reward Thomas, the little boy's father taught him how to use the telegraph machine. The telegraph sent messages to other towns over electric wires. The machine made clicking sounds in Morse code. This special code used dots and dashes that stood for the letters of the alphabet.

In 1863, Thomas Edison got a job as a telegraph operator. During his free time, Thomas kept doing experiments.

In 1868, Thomas received his first patent. It was for an electric voting machine. A patent is a special paper that proves that the invention is the inventor's and no one else's. Though Thomas did not make much money from the voting machine, he decided to work on making more things that were useful.

Thomas Edison moved to New Jersey and started his own business, making and selling his **inventions**. He also got married. He nicknamed his first child "Dot" and his second child "Dash" after the signals used to send telegraph messages.

In 1877 Thomas found a way to save sounds and replay them. He called this invention a phonograph. Thomas Edison spoke into the phonograph. When he replayed it, Thomas heard his own voice saying the nursery rhyme "Mary Had A Little Lamb." He was the first person to have his voice recorded! Today's tape recorders and CDs came from his invention.

Thomas Edison's most famous invention was the electric light bulb. In the 1870s, lights inside homes came from candles, oil lamps, or gas lights. The lights were dim and often caused fires. Thomas wanted to make a bright light that was safe to use indoors.

His idea was to use electricity to heat a thin strip of material inside a glass bulb. The material had to glow but not melt or break when it got hot. Thomas experimented for more than a year to find the right material. In 1879, he finally tried a piece of baked cotton thread. When electricity passed through the glass bulb, the thread inside glowed for 13 hours!

Other important machines Thomas Edison invented were: a movie projector, a movie camera, a cement mixer, and a copy machine. During his lifetime, Thomas Edison received 1,093 patents for his inventions. His inventions changed the world.

Word Bank
<p>inventions — original tools or processes</p> <p>laboratory — a place where people do experiments and learn about science</p>

Directions: Read the selection.

Dardanella
by M.D. Howitt



"Ow! Get me a Band-Aid. . .quick!" Dardanella yelled to her brother. She sat on the steps and removed her in-line skates. "That's enough for me!"

Charlie opened the screen door and handed her a Band-Aid. He said, "You can't quit now. You've just started. It takes practice."

"My knees hurt!" Dardanella yelled as she carried her skates and pads to her room.

Bored, Dardanella sat at her desk and drew a picture of an in-line skater. She sighed and thought, *I'm not good at anything.*

The next day at recess, Dardanella watched as her friend, Melissa, and three girls from Melissa's **ballet** class whirled and practiced their dance moves.

Dardanella told her mom, "I want to take ballet lessons!"

Dardanella got shoes and a costume and went to the lessons. But she found it tiresome to do the same movements again and again.

After a few lessons, Dardanella told her mom, "I'm not going anymore." She put her shoes and costume on the shelf next to her skates and pads.

Bored, she drew a picture of a lovely **ballerina**. She sighed and said to herself, *I'm not good at anything*.

One day after school, Dardanella visited Amanda. Amanda was strumming her **guitar**.

"Is it difficult to play the guitar?" Dardanella asked.

"A little," Amanda answered. "But with practice, I'm getting better at it."

Dardanella told her mom, "I want to play the guitar!"

Dardanella got a **secondhand** guitar. She tried to play it, but the strings hurt her fingers and she had to rest. Then Dardanella banged the guitar too hard and accidentally broke a string. She leaned the guitar against the wall under the shelf holding the in-line skates and pads and ballet shoes and costume.

Bored, Dardanella drew a picture of a girl playing a guitar. She sighed and thought, *I'm not good at anything*.

Just then, Charlie walked into Dardanella's room. "I think that's one of the best pictures you've ever drawn," he said.

"Thanks," she answered. "Charlie, what should I do? Tomorrow is Talent Day at school, but I'm not talented at anything."

"Well, you could take your drawings," Charlie suggested.

Dardanella sighed. What else *could* she do? So the next day, she gathered her drawings and trudged to school.

Before the talent contest began, Dardanella laid her drawings on Ms. Smidley's desk. Then she watched as Melissa danced and Amanda played her guitar.

At the end of Talent Day, the teachers selected the winner.

Ms. Smidley announced, "You were all so good, everyone is getting a red ribbon!" The kids clapped and cheered. Ms. Smidley added, "Except Dardanella. Dardanella gets a big blue ribbon. She's the winner!"

Ms. Smidley asked Dardanella to come to the front of the room. "I didn't know you could draw so well, Dardanella. Would you tell us your secret?"

Dardanella thought and thought. She asked herself, *What made me good at drawing?*

At last she had the answer. Dardanella smiled and said, "Practice!"

Word Bank

ballerina — a girl or woman who dances ballet

ballet — a kind of dance that involves difficult turns and leaps and that often tells a story

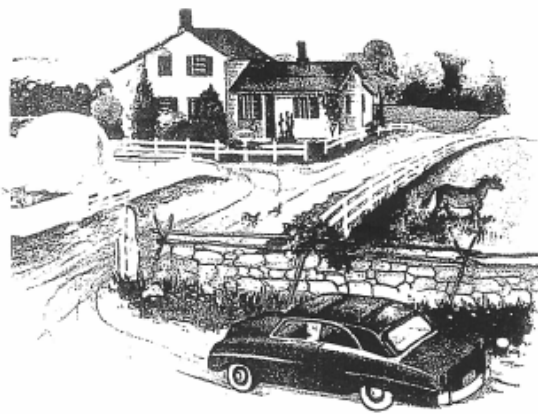
guitar — a stringed musical instrument

secondhand — once owned by someone else; not brand-new

Directions: Read the selection.

Wiggles

by Louise Woodcock



One day Donnie went with his mother to see Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Jones lived on a farm.

Mrs. Jones said, "I'm so glad to see you, Donnie; go find Wiggles to play with you."

Donnie didn't know who Wiggles was. A dog? A cat? A lamb?

The first thing he saw was a rabbit hutch. A big white rabbit was nibbling lettuce.

Just then a big girl came from the barn.

"Has this rabbit a name?" asked Donnie.

"We just call him Pinky," said the girl. "Because of his big pink ears."

She went into the house.

Donnie walked on along a lane and wondered.

Could Wiggles be these butterflies hovering over the clover?

Could Wiggles be these little chickens pecking?

Could this old mother hen be Wiggles?

How could you play with butterflies, or little chicks that ran so fast, or mother hens who squawked and fluttered away?

He walked toward the orchard.

He walked along the row of trees until he came to the last one. There was a ladder leaning against it.

"Hi!" said a voice up among the branches. "Want to come up in my tree house?"

Donnie looked up and saw a boy looking down through the leaves.

"My name's Donnie. What's yours?" asked Donnie. He put one foot on the ladder.

"Wiggles," the boy replied. "Did you ever have a tree house?"

"No," said Donnie. He climbed another step. "But why do they call you Wiggles?" he asked.

"Oh, just because I can wiggle my ears. Come up and I'll show you," Wiggles said.