

Monitor Comprehension

When students monitor their comprehension, they keep track of how well they understand the material and identify when their understanding breaks down. Related activities include asking questions, taking notes, and paraphrasing what has been read.

Reproduce the *Monitor Comprehension* visual aid and distribute it to students. Then introduce the *Monitor Comprehension* strategy to students. Explain: **Good readers pause briefly after each paragraph to ensure that they understand what they have just read. If you find that you do not understand a sentence because of a word that was confusing, reread the surrounding sentences and look for clues to the word's meaning.** Read aloud the first paragraph of the passage. Model the strategy: **I don't know what "voluminous" means. When I reread the sentence, I see that the author is saying that Pan Am planes were different from today's narrow, crowded planes. I can guess that "voluminous" means the opposite of "narrow" and "crowded."** Have students read the passage independently. Encourage them to use context clues to figure out the meanings of unknown words. When students have finished reading, direct them to complete the strategy practice activity. Then direct students to complete the skill practice activity, and review the answers together.

**DAY
1**

Remind students of the *Monitor Comprehension* strategy. Say: **Some authors create excitement or suspense by waiting until later in the story to reveal important details. You may not understand exactly what is happening at first. Pay attention to the author's descriptions and the characters' actions to help you stay focused.** Have students read the passage. When students have finished, direct them to complete the strategy practice activity. Discuss students' responses as a group. Then direct students to complete the skill practice activity, and review the answers together.

**DAY
2**

Remind students of the *Monitor Comprehension* strategy. Say: **You can take notes, underline important details, or circle key words as you read. Marking up the passage can help you stay focused and monitor your comprehension.** Direct students to read the passage independently. When they have finished, direct them to complete the strategy practice activity with a partner. Then have students complete the skill practice activity. Review the answers together.

**DAY
3**

Remind students of the *Monitor Comprehension* strategy. Read aloud the directions at the top of the page. Say: **When you pause at the end of a paragraph, think about how you would summarize the information to share it with another person. Check to make sure you understand the main idea. If not, reread the paragraph.** Have students read the passage. When students have finished, direct them to complete the strategy and skill practice activities. Review the answers as a group.

**DAY
4**

Remind students of the *Monitor Comprehension* strategy. Say: **Even if you feel you fully understand a passage, it's always helpful to read the whole passage again. Each time you reread, you pick up new details or learn to think about the topic in a new way.** Have students read the passage independently. When they have finished reading, direct them to complete the strategy and skill practice activities. Review the answers together.

**DAY
5**

Name: _____

READ THE PASSAGE Read the passage carefully. Look for clues to meanings of words you do not understand.**The First Ocean Crossings in the Air**

Between 1935 and 1941, an airline named Pan Am offered travelers a flying experience like no other. Instead of flying in narrow, crowded airplanes that you see at airports today, travelers back then boarded voluminous "flying boats" that were more like hotels than airplanes. For those who could afford it, a Pan Am flight across the Atlantic Ocean or the Pacific Ocean was its own unforgettable journey.

Covering New Ground

Pan Am's transcontinental airplanes were named Clippers after sailing ships of the 1800s. Clippers were some of the most advanced aircraft built at that time and the first to cross oceans. Two obstacles had previously prevented long-distance air travel: limited fuel capacity and lack of places to land for refueling. A Clipper, designed to land on both land and water, could "hop" across the ocean, filling up its fuel tanks at major islands. Clipper pilots had navigation skills similar to those of ship captains, and the crew was trained for landing and moving in water. It took just under a week to cross the Pacific, still much faster than three weeks by ship.

Flying Luxury Liners

Unlike planes today, which have many rows of small, cramped seats, Clippers were designed for comfort. The largest Clipper held a maximum of 36 overnight passengers who slept in berths. There were also passenger dressing rooms, lounges with couches, and dining halls where men in black coats and white gloves served meals prepared by famous chefs. A typical 1939 menu featured fruit cocktail, cream of tomato soup, chicken in wine sauce, scalloped potatoes, and pie. All of this comfort and service did not come cheap, however. A typical ticket in 1939 cost around \$700, which is over \$12,000 in today's dollars.

STRATEGY PRACTICE List one or two words you found confusing and describe how you figured out their meanings.

SKILL PRACTICE Read the item. Write your response.

1. What is this text mostly about?

2. What made the Clipper able to cross the ocean long before other airliners?

3. Why did the Clipper have so many fewer passengers than today's transatlantic flights?

READ THE PASSAGE Pay attention to how the characters in the passage respond to the events.**Invasion of the Squids**

Antonia was so excited! She had wanted to go to the beach ever since she arrived in San Diego, and now—finally—it was time to swim in the Pacific Ocean. Antonia sprinted down the long staircase to the sandy beach and raced to the waves, tossing her flip-flops aside as she ran into the water. It felt wonderful, and she swam confidently in the salty water. Antonia flipped over onto her back and looked up into the blue sky. Around her, surfers and swimmers were enjoying the ocean just as much as she was.

Suddenly, a woman near Antonia screamed. In an instant, the people around her started to shout and swim quickly toward the beach. Shocked, Antonia looked around. As she tread water in place, fear gripped her. Were there sharks nearby?

But before Antonia was able to panic, she looked into the water and saw not sharks but large squids—dozens and dozens of them. Antonia reached out and a tentacle brushed her hand, almost as if the squid were shaking hands with her. As the squids circled Antonia with their beady eyes gazing up at her, she noticed that everyone else had left the water.

Antonia swam back to land and listened to people's horrified accounts of their encounters with the squids. "One tried to pull me under!" a man exclaimed, and a girl cried, "I had three wrap their tentacles around my ankle! I don't know how I survived!" The lifeguard explained, "These are Humboldt squids. They're probably not dangerous, but you should keep your distance." As Antonia curled up in her towel on the warm sand, she remembered the feeling of shaking hands with the squid, and she smiled to herself.

STRATEGY PRACTICE Which part of the passage was the most confusing for you? How did you figure it out?

SKILL PRACTICE Read the item. Write your response.

1. How does the first paragraph set the scene?

2. If Antonia encounters squids the next time she swims in the ocean, how will she probably respond?

3. Predict what the lifeguard will do if the squids return.

READ THE PASSAGE Underline or make notes about parts of the passage you do not understand.**The Plight of the Polar Bears**

Images of polar bear cubs struggling to stay on rafts of ice are often used by groups that want to promote conservation and stop the deterioration of natural habitats. However, part of the solution lies with the polar bears themselves.

Polar bears are highly specialized. This means they have adapted to survive in a specific region and eat specific food. Polar bears live above the Arctic Circle and eat fish and arctic mammals such as seals. Their bodies are different from those of other types of bears. Polar bears feature webbed feet for swimming, thicker fur and more body fat for living and swimming in icy conditions, and light-colored fur to help them blend into their environment. As a result, polar bears do not do well when they are in a non-arctic region. They cannot run as well as other bears, they can become too hot and tire easily, and they have a hard time hunting animals that are not in the snow or ice.

Unfortunately for polar bears, climate change is reducing the size of the areas where they can live. This means the bears will eventually have to leave the arctic regions and travel farther south. However, because they are so specialized, it is unlikely that polar bears will be able to thrive as they once did.

Other creatures, such as crocodiles or cockroaches, are not nearly as specialized. They live on almost every continent and in a wide variety of climates. In fact, crocodiles are one of the most adaptable animals on the planet and have survived for millions of years. When animals specialize, they often do better than less-specialized species in the same place, but if the climate or other conditions change, the specialized animals are usually the first to die off.

If polar bears are going to survive the next 100 years, they will have to adapt. Many scientists believe that polar bears may eventually cross paths with brown bears and black bears. Whether these animals fight it out or fall in love to create new generations of hybrid bears remains to be seen. No matter how it happens, many hope that polar bears will live far into the future—in many different places.

STRATEGY PRACTICE Compare your notes to a partner's notes. Discuss how they are alike or different.**SKILL PRACTICE** Read the item. Write your response.

1. What is this text mostly about?

2. What is likely to happen to polar bears if they cannot adapt to climate change?

3. What details explain how polar bears are more fragile than brown or black bears?

READ THE PASSAGE Read slowly. Pause after each paragraph to think about what you have learned.

The Lobster Wars

Lobster fishing is a tough job, and lobster fishers are a tough group of people. Their work can be backbreaking and even dangerous. Fishers face unexpected changes in prices and profits. They brave all kinds of horrible weather to set and pull up their lobster traps. But an added danger comes when some lobster fishers violate the strict laws or informal local rules about how many traps each fisher can set and where they can be placed. In Maine in 2009, a combination of low lobster prices and high prices for fuel and bait created an explosive situation that nearly ended in tragedy.

Lobster fishers all along the southern Maine coast were feeling the pinch of hard times. As a result, many began using fishing practices that were dishonest or unfair. Some lobster fishers cut the trap lines of other fishers, and two lobster boats were intentionally sunk in Owls Head Harbor. Then, in the most dramatic and dangerous moment of the situation, a dispute on Matinicus Island over where two men could fish for lobster ended in violence when one man shot and wounded the other. This event brought the “Lobster Wars” to national attention. In no time at all, the nation was paying close attention to how Maine lobster fishers were treating one another.

Most lobster fishers agreed that the solution to the rising problems was to formalize the local rules and to limit the number of traps even further. This may seem strange, but areas with fewer traps actually produce more lobsters because the lobsters are not overfished. Overfishing would reduce the reproduction rate, which would lower the lobster population. Having plenty of lobsters to catch means less conflict for fishers. Today, fishing for lobsters in Maine is still a tricky business, but it is not nearly as dangerous as it once was.

STRATEGY PRACTICE How did pausing briefly after each paragraph help you better understand the passage?

SKILL PRACTICE Read the item. Write your response.

1. What are three common problems faced by all lobster fishers?

2. What caused major problems for lobster fishers in Maine in 2009?

3. How did placing a limit on lobster traps affect the lobster fishers?

READ THE PASSAGE When you have finished reading the passage, read it again.

Cowboy Poetry

Cowboy poetry got its start as an oral tradition after the Civil War. Many cowboys were great readers and had a lot of time on their hands during trail rides. They would take traditional poetry forms, such as ballads and sonnets, and create their own poems. Cowboys would recite the poems around campfires during the long evenings to entertain themselves.

Some cowboy poems are short and lyrical, while others are long narrative tales. Cowboy poems include cowboy jargon, such as *lariats*, *chaps*, and *buckaroos*. Themes in cowboy poetry include cowboy adventures, life on the range, working on ranches, the landscape of the American West, and humorous stories that poke fun at modern technology or behavior.

While cowboy poetry is not as popular today as it was 100 years ago, there are still writers penning cowboy poems, as well as festivals or “roundups” where poets and storytellers celebrate the traditions and best-known works of cowboy poets. Over a dozen festivals occur across the country; during National Poetry Month in April each year, one week is dedicated to cowboy poetry. Many people across the United States work to make sure this unique art form does not disappear.

Even if cowboy poetry is declining in popularity, its influence on other art forms is easy to see. Country music, for example, started with songs that were very similar to cowboy poems and were set to music—usually with guitars. If you listen to songs recorded in the early 1900s, you can hear the same themes and ideas that exist in cowboy poems today.

STRATEGY PRACTICE How did rereading help you better understand the passage?

SKILL PRACTICE Read the item. Write your response.

1. On what did the original cowboy poets base their poetry style?

2. According to the text, what are *roundups*?

3. Make a prediction about the future of cowboy poetry.
