

**Our World****Fluency: Reading with Expression**

- ★ When you read a story or an article with expression, you make it more interesting by stressing certain words (saying them louder or faster) and varying your speech in other ways. You might even whisper some parts.

Practice reading the following selection at least three times. Then perform it for a friend. Use a different voice for each of the three parts: the Narrator and the twins, Reader 1 and Reader 2. Remember to:

- Pronounce all words clearly.
- Vary the tone, pace, and volume of your speaking. Use pauses or a louder or softer voice to stress key words and phrases.
- Look your audience in the eye as often as possible.
- Use gestures whenever they are appropriate.

The Day the Volcano Blew Its Top

Narrator: The twins had lived near Mount St. Helens in Washington State all their lives, but nothing exciting had ever happened there before. Now the whole community was watching smoke curl out of the top of the mountain. The twins were standing with their father on a high hill near their home. They were several miles from the mountain. Every so often, a small earthquake gently shook the ground where they were standing.

Reader 1: Did you feel that earthquake? I think this old mountain is on its last legs! Any minute now, the top of it is going to explode, into a ball of fire!

Reader 2: I hope not 'cause then all the camping grounds on the mountain will be ruined. Don't you remember all the fun times we had there?

Narrator: Mount St. Helens had been a very popular place to hike, camp, and fish—before the shaking and rumbling began. Now all the roads leading to the mountain were closed.

Reader 1: Mmm. Things are sure quiet now.

Reader 2: I'll say! This eruption is taking forever and a day. Nothing's happened for the last 20 minutes, and I'm bored stiff. I'm ready to call it a day and head for home.

Reader 1: Take it easy! I think this mountain has something up its sleeve today. I'm not ready yet to call it quits.

Narrator: Their father had been searching the mountaintop with binoculars. Suddenly, he pointed at a bulge in the rock and shouted for them to look.

Reader 1: Wow! The mountain is moving! This is getting out of hand! It's getting bigger and bigger and ...

Reader 2: Cool! I'm really glad we stuck it out! That's awesome!



Our World

Comprehension: Understand Idioms

- ★ An **idiom** is a group of words that does not mean exactly what it says. For example, when you hear that people are “struggling to make ends meet,” they are not trying to fasten a belt or tie a ribbon around a package. They are having trouble paying their bills.

Read each idiom from the script on page 8 and choose the sentence that correctly states its meaning.

- 1** I think this old mountain is on its last legs.
- (A) The mountain has old legs.
 - (B) The mountain cannot walk.
 - (C) No one can walk on the mountain.
 - (D) The mountain is reaching the end of its existence.
- 2** Let's hang on a little longer.
- (F) Don't let go
 - (G) Let's not hold on.
 - (H) Let's wait a few more minutes.
 - (J) Let's hold on to the railing.
- 3** I'm bored stiff.
- (A) I feel like a board.
 - (B) My muscles are stiff.
 - (C) I'm extremely bored.
 - (D) My whole body is stiff.
- 4** I'm ready to call it a day.
- (F) I will call it, “a day.”
 - (G) It's not night anymore.
 - (H) I think its name is Day.
 - (J) I think it's time to quit.
- 5** This eruption is taking forever and a day.
- (A) The eruption is taking a day.
 - (B) The eruption is taking a very long time.
 - (C) The eruption will not happen.
 - (D) The eruption will go on for eternity.
- 6** This is getting out of hand!
- (F) This slipped through my fingers.
 - (G) This is hard to hold.
 - (H) This is out of control.
 - (J) I dropped something.
- 7** I'm not ready yet to call it quits.
- (A) I'll be ready soon.
 - (B) I don't know who to call.
 - (C) I'm not ready to go yet.
 - (D) I'm ready to quit.
- 8** Take it easy!
- (F) Take the easy way out.
 - (G) Don't get anxious.
 - (H) Do the easy ones.
 - (J) Be gentle.



Our World

Comprehension: Draw Conclusions

★ When you draw a conclusion, you think about what you just read and what you already know. Then you reach a decision about something in the selection, something the author hinted at but did not state. After reading *The Day the Volcano Blew Its Top* on page 8, answer questions 1 through 5.

- 1 Choose the sentence that draws a correct conclusion.
 - A Reader 1 is more eager to watch the volcano than Reader 2.
 - B Reader 2 is more eager to watch the volcano than Reader 1.
 - C The father is not very interested in watching the volcano erupt.
 - D The narrator is more interested in the volcano than Readers 1 and 2.

- 2 You can conclude that the volcano will not cause the family to move. What information from the story supports this conclusion?

- 3 Choose the sentence that draws a correct conclusion.
 - A The father and twins have watched the mountain on other days.
 - B This is the first day that they have watched the mountain.
 - C The family will probably not watch it tomorrow.
 - D The family comes to this spot many times a day.

- 4 Draw a conclusion about the small earthquakes that gently shook the ground as the family watched smoke curl out of the top of the mountain.

- 5 Choose the sentence that draws a correct conclusion.
 - A The family might be injured by the eruption.
 - B The family is on a hiking trail on the mountain.
 - C Police are keeping everyone from getting close to the mountain.
 - D The family was camping on the mountain when the quakes began.