

# INTRODUCTION

**Wonder Stories** is a series of books designed to improve the reading comprehension of older students whose reading abilities are below grade level. The series is also ideal for challenging the abilities of younger students functioning at or above grade level.

Each factual article begins with a question about a topic that has prompted thoughts like, "I wonder how, I wonder why, I wonder what. . ." Comprehension questions following each story address the following skills: main idea, finding a fact, locating an answer, inference, vocabulary, and word analysis.

The high-interest stories appeal to all ages, making it possible to tailor the appropriate book for individual students depending upon their reading abilities. In order to ensure that stories were at the desired reading levels, readability scales were used.\*

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### A Note About Readability Scores

Readability scales are useful as long as one realizes their limitations. Results are approximate guidelines only, with a minimum margin of error of (+ or -) 1.5 grade levels. In other words, a story measured at a second grade readability level could easily be suitable for both first and third graders. Another limitation is that two different readability scales can be applied to the same sample, yet yield widely varied results. In spite of the inexact nature of readability scales, we at Remedia use them because they measure word and sentence length, both valid predictors of readability. They also help us provide vocabulary-controlled materials in order to meet the special education needs of many of our valued clients. At the same time, we realize that these scales are not designed to measure every other factor affecting readability, such as sentence structure or appeal to the reader. We are also aware of the variance in standards and expectations set for each grade level. What is first grade material in one school may be second grade in another. At Remedia we strive to take all these factors into consideration as we develop and revise materials. We leave the rest in your capable hands. Regarding readability, you—and your students—will be the final judge.

# What causes colds?



For years no one knew why we catch colds. Most colds attack in the winter. For that reason, we thought chilly air gave us colds. Now we know that colds come from a kind of germ. The germ is a virus.

The first sign of a cold is often a sore throat. The viruses make themselves at home there. Then they move down into your chest. Or they may move up into your nose and head. You start to sneeze and cough. Your eyes may water, and you may feel sleepy.

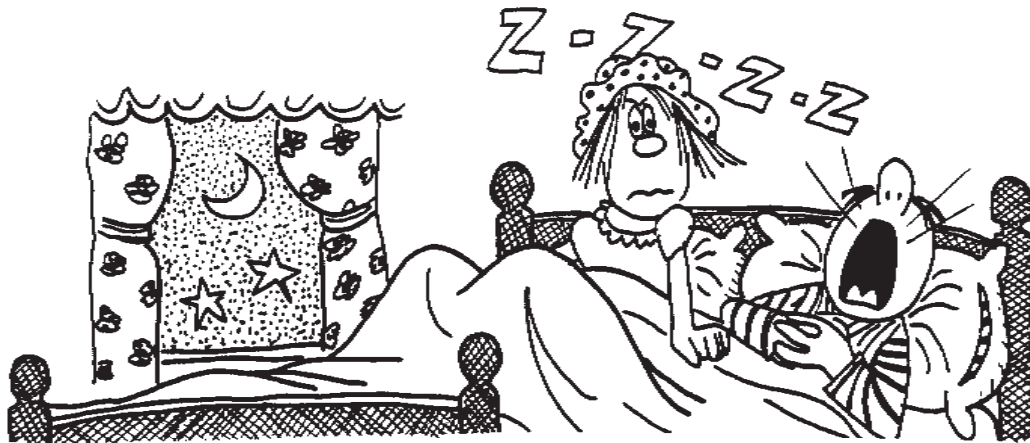
There is no cure for the cold. A cold will go away by itself in three to seven days. The best thing is to rest and drink fruit juices.

If you sneeze, be sure to cover your nose and mouth. Otherwise the germs will spread. All your friends might get the germ.

After you have a cold, you are protected from that virus. It won't hurt you again. But you can catch a second cold from a different virus.

1. This story is about why we watch \_\_\_\_\_.
2. What are the signs of a cold? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Write the sentence in paragraph one that tells what kind of germ turns into a cold.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Who might you go see if you have a cold?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is a word in paragraph five that means "kept safe from"?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Write the homonyms in the story for these words:  
knows: \_\_\_\_\_                      heir: \_\_\_\_\_  
soar: \_\_\_\_\_

# Why do you sleep?



Your body likes to stay active. On a normal day, you might ride your bike to school. Later, you might play softball. Then you might walk to the store for some juice.

But, at some point, your body needs to rest. It begins to weaken. You don't have the same amount of energy. This happens because your body must have food and sleep each day. Without these, your cells slow down. You can't perform.

You know when you are sleepy. Your eyes feel heavy. You want to lie down. You lose interest in what is happening around you.

While you sleep, your muscles have time to get stronger. But your brain does not rest. It thinks about what happened that day. It also dreams. Your brain does all kinds of things that you don't remember the next day.

After eight hours of sleep, you feel ready to go again. You are refreshed.

If you don't get sleep, you feel grouchy. You might also start to see things that aren't really there. That is your body's way of saying, "Stop! I need a break."

1. This story is about why our bodies need to \_\_\_\_\_ .

2. What happens to your muscles while you sleep?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which paragraph tells what your brain does while you sleep? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What do you think would happen if you kept playing softball even though you needed sleep?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What is a word in paragraph six that means "upset; not in a good mood"?

\_\_\_\_\_

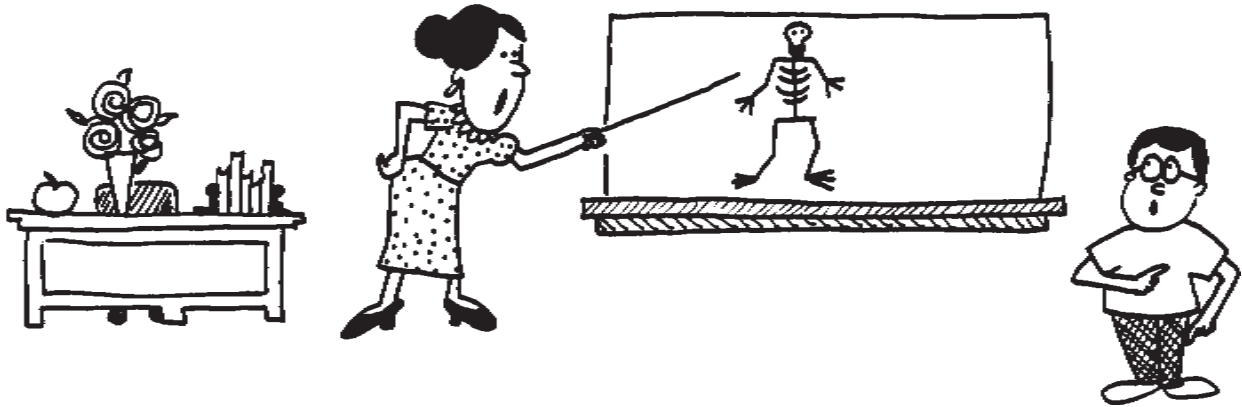
6. Find a three-syllable word in each of these paragraphs:

paragraph two: \_\_\_\_\_

paragraph four: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# How many bones do you have?



Believe it or not, the number of bones in your body changes as you grow! At certain times, you have more bones than at other times.

You are born with 270 bones. As a baby, your bones are quite small. In fact, some of them look more like twigs in size. These are called bony centers. They are just pieces of bones.

As you grow, new bony centers form. Soon you have 443 bones and bony centers. At that point, they start to join together. Two or more will grow into one strong bone.

By the time you become a teen, you will have lost your bony centers. You will have only 206 bones. That's less than you had at birth.

The changing of bones never stops. But it does slow down. An old person will still lose bones. A 90-year-old grandmother may have fewer than 200 bones left.

1. This story is about how many \_\_\_\_\_ you have as you grow.

2. At what point in life do you have the fewest bones?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Write the sentence in paragraph two that tells how many bones you have when you are born.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Why do you think it's important for your bones to grow?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What is a word in paragraph two that means "small sticks"?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Write two other forms of the word "bone."

\_\_\_\_\_