Teacher Created Resources®

READING COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES

FOR SCIENCE









GRADE 4

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Ice Cream Headache



These are new words to practice.

Say each word 10 times.

⁎ forehead	⁎ fiber
⁎ headache	⁎ receives
⁎ palate	⁎ alert
⁎ nerve	⁎ intercepted

Before or after reading the story, write one sentence that contains at least one new word.

_____

_____

_____

Ice Cream Headache

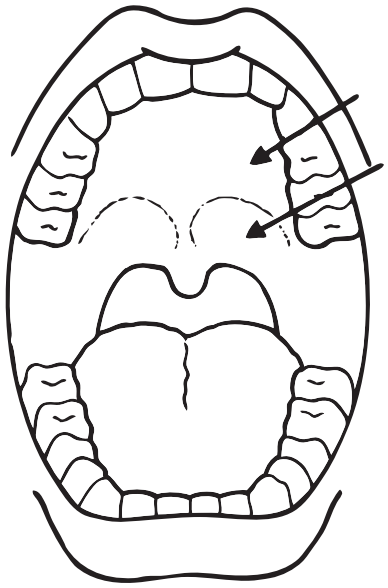


Eat any flavor of ice cream and what sometimes happens? When one eats any flavor of ice cream, one sometimes gets a pain. The pain is in one's forehead. We call this forehead pain an "ice cream headache." Why do we get an ice cream headache? Why does eating any flavor of ice cream sometimes cause our forehead to hurt?

The roof of the mouth is called the palate. The front part of the palate is hard and bony. It is called the hard palate. The back part of the palate is soft and fleshy. It is called the soft palate. There is a nerve in our hard palate that connects to our forehead. A nerve is a fiber or bundle of fibers. A fiber is like a thin thread. The fibers connect parts of the body. It connects parts like muscles, glands, and organs to the brain and spinal cord.

A nerve carries signals. It carries signals to and from the brain to other parts of the body. When one eats ice cream too quickly, one's brain receives, or gets, a message. The brain receives a message that some part of one's face is getting too cold. One's face is getting too chilled. The brain receives the message about the cold, but the brain does not know whether it is one's forehead or hard palate that is too chilled.

The brain responds by sending a pain alert. The pain alert is a warning signal. The pain alerts, or warns, the body that it is getting too chilled. Sometimes the pain alert is intercepted. When something is intercepted, it is cut off. It is stopped or seized on the way.



Remember that there is a nerve in your hard palate that connects to your forehead. Sometimes, one's forehead intercepts the message. The pain alert message goes to one's forehead! It is one's forehead that feels the pain! The result is an ice cream headache.

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Ice Cream Headache



After reading the story, answer the questions.
Fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

1. The front part of the palate is
   - (a) bony
   - (b) soft
   - (c) nerve
   - (d) fleshy

2. This story is mainly about
   - (a) why we have nerves
   - (b) why we eat ice cream
   - (c) why we have one kind of pain
   - (d) why we sometimes feel chilled

3. From the story you can tell that eating chocolate ice cream
   - (a) is no more likely to cause an ice cream headache than eating vanilla ice cream
   - (b) is much more likely to cause an ice cream headache than eating vanilla ice cream
   - (c) is much less likely to cause an ice cream headache then eating strawberry ice cream
   - (d) is much more likely to cause an ice cream headache than eating strawberry ice cream

4. What word best fills in the blank: We tried to pass notes in class, but the teacher _____ our messages.
   - (a) sent
   - (b) received
   - (c) connected
   - (d) intercepted

5. Think about how the word *alert* relates to *warning*. What words relate in the same way?

   alert : warning

   - (a) palate : mouth
   - (b) signal : message
   - (c) flavor : ice cream
   - (d) headache : forehead

Not Bathing for 100 Days



These are new words to practice.

Say each word 10 times.

⁎ explorers	⁎ microorganism
⁎ participate	⁎ microbes
⁎ experiment	⁎ deficiencies
⁎ intervals	⁎ healthy

Before or after reading the story, write one sentence that contains at least one new word.

_____

_____

_____

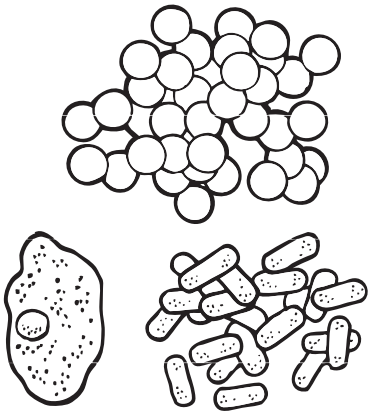
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Not Bathing for 100 Days



Seven Arctic explorers were asked to participate in an experiment. When one *participates*, one joins in. One is part of something. The experiment the explorers participated in had to do with bathing. Two of the Arctic explorers did not bathe. They did not bathe for 100 days! The remaining five explorers bathed at regular intervals. They bathed at regular times. At the end of the 100 days, all the explorers were checked. What were they checked for?





The explorers were checked for microorganisms. A microorganism is a tiny creature. It is an organism that cannot be seen with the naked eye. It can only be seen with microscopes. Microorganisms are sometimes called microbes. We cannot see microbes, but we live with them. They live on us. They live in us. In fact, we have more microbe cells in and on our bodies that we do human cells making up our bodies! We are outnumbered by microbes!

Many people think, "Ugh! I'll get sick!" when they think of microbes. We call microbes that make us ill germs. The truth is that most microbes are not germs. Only 4 percent of microbes make us sick. This means that out of 100 microbes, only four are bad. We need microorganisms. Without microbes, we would have vitamin deficiencies. One has deficiencies when one has less than what one needs. Our hearts would not be as strong, and we wouldn't be able to digest our food. Microorganisms help keep us healthy.

What was the experiment's result? The result might seem surprising. The explorers who had bathed at regular intervals had no fewer microbes on their skin than the ones who had not bathed! The same number of microorganisms was found on the skin of the washed and unwashed explorers!

The experiment results do not mean that people should not bathe. Think about how dirty someone would be if one did not bathe for 100 days. Most important, think of how one would smell! He or she would stink! The point is that our bodies maintain a healthy balance with microorganisms. We are not harmed by most of them.

Quiz

Not Bathing for 100 Days



After reading the story, answer the questions.
Fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

1. This story is mainly about
   - (a) health
   - (b) explorers
   - (c) experiments
   - (d) microorganisms

2. What is true about the number of microbial cells in and on our bodies?
   - (a) We have less microbial cells than human cells.
   - (b) We have more microbial cells than human cells.
   - (c) We have less microbial cells than human cells only if we bathe.
   - (d) We have more microbial cells than human cells only if we bathe.

3. Think about how the word *participate* relates to *join*. What words relate in the same way?

   participate : join

   - (a) bathe : wash
   - (b) smell : dirty
   - (c) maintain : balance
   - (d) results : experiment

4. We need microorganisms to
   - (a) make vitamins
   - (b) harm our heart
   - (c) keep from stinking
   - (d) help digest our food

5. The bell rang every hour. The bell rang at regular _____.
   - (a) cells
   - (b) balances
   - (c) intervals
   - (d) deficiencies

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Answer Key



Page 11-Trapped in Quicksand
1. d
2. a
3. d
4. a
5. d

Page 14-Doctor Ants
1. b
2. a
3. c
4. c
5. d

Page 17-How Roosevelt Knew
1. c
2. a
3. a
4. d
5. b

Page 20-Photographing a Giant
1. c
2. b
3. a
4. b
5. a

Page 23-A 100-Story Sand Pile
1. c
2. a
3. b
4. a
5. b

Page 26-A Killer Without Bones
1. b
2. c
3. d
4. d
5. c

Page 29-What Makes Bread Rise
1. c
2. a
3. a
4. d
5. c

Page 32-The Vomit Comet
1. c
2. b
3. c
4. d
5. b

Page 35-A Baby that Does Not Eat
1. c
2. c
3. a
4. d
5. b

Page 38-Three Heads, Four Wings, Eight Legs
1. b
2. a
3. d
4. b
5. c

Page 41-Ice Cream Headache
1. a
2. c
3. a
4. d
5. b

Page 44-The Largest Living Creature
1. d
2. a
3. a
4. c
5. b

Page 47-Where Rocks Are Bigger than Plants
1. d
2. a
3. c
4. a
5. c

Page 50-Thinking Like a Scientist
1. c
2. d
3. a
4. b
5. a

Page 53-Belly to Back, Not Back to Belly
1. d
2. c
3. a
4. a
5. c

Page 56-Animals in the Dust
1. a
2. b
3. c
4. d
5. c

Page 59-How to Tell the Earth is Round
1. c
2. d
3. c
4. b
5. b

Page 62-The Strangest Mammals on Earth
1. d
2. b
3. a
4. b
5. c

Page 65-Living on the Space Shuttle
1. b
2. a
3. d
4. d
5. c

Page 68-The Spitting Sharpshooter
1. d
2. a
3. c
4. a
5. d

Page 71-Why Clocks Run Clockwise
1. d
2. b
3. c
4. a
5. c

Page 74-Not Bathing for 100 Days
1. d
2. b
3. a
4. d
5. c

Page 77-Living Nurseries
1. c
2. b
3. a
4. a
5. c

Page 80-The Man who Broke the Sound Barrier
1. d
2. b
3. b
4. a
5. d

Page 83-Fixed by Bacteria
1. b
2. c
3. b
4. a
5. d

Page 86-Vomit Attack
1. a
2. c
3. a
4. b
5. b

Page 89-Hurricanes and Tree Rings
1. d
2. b
3. d
4. c
5. a

Page 92-How a Volcano Led to an Amazing Find
1. d
2. d
3. b
4. c
5. a

Page 95-A Beetle that Shoots
1. d
2. b
3. d
4. c
5. c

Page 98-Why the First Deodorants Made One Rot
1. c
2. d
3. a
4. d
5. c

Page 101-The Rat that Outsmarted Scientists
1. c
2. d
3. b
4. d
5. c

Page 104-Relative Humidity—Ugh!
1. c
2. c
3. a
4. b
5. a

Page 107-What the Baby Slept Through
1. d
2. d
3. b
4. c
5. a

Page 110-The Speckled Monster
1. c
2. b
3. a
4. b
5. a

Page 113-Yellowstone and Outer Space
1. c
2. b
3. b
4. a
5. c

Page 116-The Army Ant Butterfly Mystery
1. a
2. b
3. b
4. d
5. d

Page 119-Volcano Fun Facts
1. d
2. b
3. c
4. b
5. d

Page 122-Traveling Far
1. c
2. c
3. a
4. d
5. b

Page 125-Red Eyes
1. d
2. c
3. a
4. c
5. b

Page 128-An Accidental Discovery
1. c
2. d
3. a
4. a
5. d

Page 131-Living Dragons
1. b
2. c
3. b
4. d
5. a

Page 134-A Dinner a Little Too Old to Eat
1. b
2. d
3. c
4. c
5. b

Page 137-Extreme Nature
1. b
2. c
3. d
4. b
5. d

Page 140-What the Fisherman Didn't Know
1. a
2. c
3. d
4. b
5. b