

Three Minute High School Reading Assessment

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Directions for Administering the *Graded Passages*

Administering the *Graded Passages* is simple and straightforward. You simply ask students to read a grade-level passage to you and ask them to recall what they remember from the passage after it has been read. While students read and recall the passage, you monitor their performance for word recognition, fluency, and comprehension. The specific directions are outlined below (in the directions below we identify the student by use of the male pronoun for the sake of convenience only):

1. Present the student with a copy of the passage from *Graded Passages* that corresponds to his assigned grade level. (We ask students to read a passage at their assigned grade level in order to determine their level of performance on passages that they are expected to master during that grade level.) Ask the student to read the passage orally to you in the way he might normally read the passage. Tell the student that at the end of the reading you will ask him to tell you what he remembers about the passage.
2. Have the child read the passage aloud for 60 seconds. If the student stops at an unknown word and does not attempt to pronounce it for 2 seconds, or if the student attempts the word but clearly has little chance of reading it correctly, tell the student the word and ask him to continue reading. During the oral reading you should have a copy of the passage in front of you. Mark any uncorrected errors that the student makes by drawing a line through the missed word . Errors include words that are mispronounced or

omitted or that you provide to the student. If a child mispronounces or omits a word, but later corrects the word, write and circle a “c” above the word to indicate it was corrected. At the end of the 60-second period, mark where the student is at in the text.

3. After the student has read for 60 seconds, direct his attention to the beginning of the text and ask the student to follow along silently while you read the text aloud to him. Read the passage to the child in a normal and expressive voice. (You read the text to the student to remove any difficulties the student may have in word recognition or fluency that may hamper his comprehension of the passage. Listening comprehension is a good measure of the students’ reading comprehension). At the end of your reading, remove the passage from view of the student and ask him to tell you what he remembers from the passage. After the student has retold the passage, ask him if he has anything else he remembers about the passage. If the student is unable or unwilling to retell anything from the passage, you may ask the student for specific information (e.g., “What is the main idea of this story?” “What was described in this story?”).

Especially if the student has made few oral reading errors, you may, as an alternative to reading the passage to the student, ask him to read the rest of the passage silently. At the end of the student’s reading remove the passage from his view and ask him to retell what he remembers from the reading. Keep in mind that a source of difficulty in comprehension may be problems in word recognition or fluency.

After the student has retold the passage, the assessment is complete and needs to be scored.

Scoring and Interpreting the *Graded Passages*

Scoring the *Graded Passages* is simple and quick. The following procedures should be followed:

- Word Recognition (Decoding). Word recognition is determined by calculating the percentage of words read correctly in the 60-second oral reading. Divide the total number of words read (correct and incorrect) by the total number of words read correctly. For example, if the student read a total of 94 words in the 60-second read and made 8 errors, the percentage of words read correctly would be reflected in the following fraction:

$$\frac{86}{94} \text{ (86 divided by 94) } = 91.5\%$$

In other words, the student read 91.5% of the words correctly.

Instructional reading level is normally marked by a word recognition accuracy rate of 92-98%. Independent reading level is normally marked by an accuracy rate of 99-100%.

A normally developing student should begin a grade reading material at that grade level at an instructional level and, by the end of the school year, at an independent word recognition level. For example, a ninth grader's performance on a ninth-grade passage would be instructional at the beginning of the year but independent by the end of the year. Students who perform at the frustration level at the end of the school year, or who do not demonstrate good progress over the year, should be considered for additional assessment to confirm their decoding

difficulty. Such students may benefit from specific instructional intervention in decoding.

- **Reading Fluency-Automaticity.** One way reading fluency can be measured is through reading rate. Reading rate provides a measure of the extent to which a reader can automatically decode words, thus leaving cognitive resources free for the more important task of comprehending a passage. To determine rate, simply count the number of words the student has read correctly during the 60-second oral read. (Words read correctly include those words that were initially errored but then later corrected by the student.) Then compare the students' performance against the reading rates shown below for the appropriate grade and time within the year.

Target Reading Rates by Grade Level

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>
9-10	120-170 wcpm	130-180	140-190
10-11	130-180	140-190	150-200

Students whose reading rate falls within the appropriate range shown above are performing at grade level expectations. Students who fall below the range may be considered at risk in terms of fluency-automaticity. Students whose reading rate is above the range limits may be considered to be doing well in fluency-automaticity; however, students who read exceptionally fast without attending to punctuation and other phrase boundaries, and who read without sufficient expression may also be considered at risk in fluency. Additional

assessment may be appropriate for students who perform poorly at the end of the year or who do not show improvement over the course of the school year.

Students considered at-risk in fluency may benefit from instruction aimed at improving reading fluency.

- **Reading Fluency-Expression.** Reading fluency is more than just reading fast. It is also the ability to interpret a text with appropriate phrasing and expression. You can measure this dimension of fluency by listening to the student's 60-second oral read and rating it on the Multidimensional Fluency Scale below. Initially you may need to tape record the student's reading and listen to it in order to provide a rating for each of the four scales. Soon, however, you will be able to score the scales on the spot.

At the beginning of the school year it is not unusual for students to score in the bottom half of each of the fluency dimensions (i.e., to have a total fluency score of 8 or below). However, by the end of the school year, students should be rated in the top half in each dimension when reading grade-level material (i.e., to have a total fluency score of 9 or above). End-of-year ratings in the bottom half for any of the fluency dimensions, or a total fluency score of 8 or less, may indicate a need for additional assessment or instructional intervention.

Multidimensional Fluency Scale*

Score	Expression & Volume	Phrasing	Smoothness	Pace
1	Reads words as if simply to get them out. Little sense of trying to make text sound like natural language. Tends to read in a quiet voice	Reads in monotone with little sense of phrase boundaries; frequently reads word-by-word.	Makes frequent extended pauses, hesitations, false starts, sound-outs, repetitions, and/or multiple attempts.	Reads slowly and laboriously.
2	Begins to use voice to make text sound like natural language in some areas but not in others. Focus remains largely on pronouncing the words. Still reads in a quiet voice.	Frequently reads in two- and three-word phrases, giving the impression of choppy reading; improper stress and intonation fail to mark ends of sentences and clauses.	Experiences several "rough spots" in text where extended pauses or hesitations are more frequent and disruptive.	Reads moderately slowly.
3	Makes text sound like natural language throughout the better part of the passage. Occasionally slips into expressionless reading. Voice volume is generally appropriate throughout the text.	Reads with a mixture of run-ons, mid-sentence pauses for breath, and some choppiness; reasonable stress and intonation	Occasionally breaks smooth rhythm because of difficulties with specific words and/or structures.	Reads with an uneven mixture of fast and slow pace.
4	Reads with good expression and enthusiasm throughout the text. Varies expression and volume to match his or her interpretation of the passage.	Generally reads with good phrasing, mostly in clause and sentence units, with adequate attention to expression.	Generally reads smoothly with some breaks, but resolves word and structure difficulties quickly, usually through self-correction.	Consistently reads at conversational pace; appropriate rate throughout reading.

This scale is an adaptation of one developed by Zutell & Rasinski, 1991.

The multidimensional fluency scale is also useful for helping students evaluate their own reading and in developing their own understanding of fluency in reading.

- **Comprehension.** How well a student understands what he reads is the ultimate hallmark of proficient reading. You can get a good sense of the student's ability to understand a text by through the retelling. *After the student has completed the 60 second oral read **and** after you have read the entire passage to the student, remove the passage from the view of the student and ask him to retell to you what he remembers from the passage. After the student has told you all they can remember from the passage, ask them if there is anything else they can recall from the passage. If the student is unable or unwilling to retell anything from the passage, you may ask for probe the student for specific information (e.g. "What is the main idea of this story? What was described in this story? etc.).*

When you are satisfied that the student has told you as much as he can remember from the passage, rate the recall on the Comprehension Rubric below. A score of 3 or below suggests inadequate recall and comprehension of the passage. At the beginning of the school year it is not unusual for a student's recall of a grade-level passage to be rated at level 3 or below. By the end of the school year, student performance should be in the upper half of the scale. Scores in the lower half of the scale at the end of the year should signal more in-depth diagnosis and perhaps instructional intervention in comprehension.

If you choose to allow the student to read the passage silently, at the end of the reading remove the passage from his sight of the student and complete the

recall procedures described above. Use the same comprehension rubric to score the retelling.

Comprehension Rubric

- 1. No recall or minimal recall of only a fact of two from the passage.**
- 2. Student recalls of a number of unrelated facts of varied importance.**
- 3. Student recalls the main idea of the passage with a few supporting details.**
- 4. Student recalls the main idea along with a fairly robust set of supporting details, although not necessarily organized logically or sequentially as presented in the passage.**
- 5. Student recall is a comprehensive summary of the passage, presented in a logical order and/or with a robust set of details, and includes a statement of main idea.**
- 6. Student recall is a comprehensive summary of the passage, presented in a logical order and/or with a robust set of details, and includes a statement of main idea. Student also makes reasonable connections beyond the text to his/her own personal life, another text, etc.**

- Recording scores. After administering and scoring the *Graded Passages* you will want to record students' scores. A simple grid that allows you to record scores for decoding accuracy, fluency rate, fluency expression, and comprehension several times over the course of a school year should work fine. You may want to address areas of concern with additional assessment and instruction and bring them to the attention of parents, school administrators, or other teachers.

Folding Paper for Peace

Every day people use paper. We write on it and read from it. We use it in books, **18**
 newspapers, magazines, and letters. It would seem that the uses for paper are nearly **32**
 endless. Back in the 1950's, a young girl named Sadako Sasaki even used paper as a **48**
 means of hope and inspiration. Sadako was two when she was exposed to deadly **62**
 radiation from the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima in World War II. At first she **77**
 seemed fine, but as the years progressed she became sick from the effects of the bomb. **93**
 When she was in sixth grade, Sadako was diagnosed with leukemia. In the hope of **108**
 helping in her recovery, she set about to make one thousand paper cranes. Every day, she **124**
 folded paper into tiny cranes believing that they would somehow help her recover. **137**
 Unfortunately, after fighting against the disease for eight months, Sadako died on **149**
 October 25, 1955. This, however, was not to be the end of her hope as children across **166**
 Japan decided to continue making paper cranes as a call for peace in a time of trouble. In **184**
 the end, the children's mission was turned into a special place in Peace Memorial Park in **200**
 Hiroshima, Japan. The Children's Peace Monument, also known as the Tower **213**
 of a Thousand Cranes, contains a large brass monument topped with a young girl with **224**
 a golden paper crane in her outstretched hands. The monument is covered with bright **240**
 colors as children from around the world still send thousands of paper cranes in the belief **256**
 that someday, they will live in a peace-filled world. **265**

Name: _____ Date: _____ Gr: 9

WCPM: _____ Errors/Min: _____ % Accuracy: _____

Flu Rating (4-16): _____ Comp (1-6): _____

Folding Paper for Peace

Every day people use paper. We write on it and read from it. We use it in books, newspapers, magazines, and letters. It would seem that the uses for paper are nearly endless. Back in the 1950's, a young girl named Sadako Sasaki even used paper as a means of hope and inspiration. Sadako was two when she was exposed to deadly radiation from the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima in World War II. At first she seemed fine, but as the years progressed she became sick from the effects of the bomb. When she was in sixth grade, Sadako was diagnosed with leukemia. In the hope of helping in her recovery, she set about to make one thousand paper cranes. Every day, she folded paper into tiny cranes believing that they would somehow help her recover. Unfortunately, after fighting against the disease for eight months, Sadako died on October 25, 1955. This, however, was not to be the end of her hope as children across Japan decided to continue making paper cranes as a call for peace in a time of trouble. In the end, the children's mission was turned into a special place in Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, Japan. The Children's Peace Monument, also known as the Tower of a Thousand Cranes, contains a large brass monument topped with a young girl with a golden paper crane in her outstretched hands. The monument is covered with bright colors as children from around the world still send thousands of paper cranes in the belief that someday, they will live in a peace-filled world.

Reading Level: 9.9

Dale Chall: 7-8; 9-10 (2nd half)

Sources: Paper Cranes and the Children's Peace Monument. Retrieved June 30, 2004 from
<http://www.city.hiroshima.jp/shimin/heiwa/crane.html>

The Children's Peace Monument. Retrieved June 30, 2004 from
<http://www.city.hiroshima.jp/shimin/heiwa/monument.html>
alb

Westminster Abbey – The Home of Kings and Queens

For the past 1,000 years, Westminster Abbey, located in London, England, has been the home to the coronation of every king and queen of England. The first recorded coronation was held on Christmas Day in 1066 and the most recent on June 2, 1953. Kings as young as nine years old (Henry III) and queens too sick to walk (Anne) have all been crowned in Westminster Abbey.

The coronation ceremony has five parts: The Introduction which includes the Entry, the Oath, and the Presentation of the Bible; the Consecration which is when the service begins; the Giving of the Royal Robes and Insignia, ending with the crowning; Enthroning and Homage, which includes the new king sitting on the throne; and Holy Communion. All of this happens in the presence of key dignitaries from around the world.

The Coronation Chair was originally created with the Stone of Scone, a sacred stone captured from Scotland, contained under the seat. As a gesture of good will, the stone was returned to Scotland in 1996 and is now on display at Edinburgh Castle. Other important items used in the coronation ceremony include the royal robes, holy oil with which the new Sovereign is anointed, the Royal Throne, and, of course, the crown.

Over the years, kings and queens have changed parts of the ceremony. In 1553, Queen Mary refused to be crowned sitting on the coronation chair since she was a strict Catholic and the previous king who had sat on the throne was a Protestant. George IV wanted an extravagant celebration so he had a new crown made containing over 12,000 diamonds. Whatever the demands, Westminster Abbey has met them all and has stood the test of time and change.

Dale/Chall 9-10

Reading Level: 10.3

Source: Westminster Abbey. Retrieved June 28, 2004 from http://www.westminster-abbey.org/coronation_tour/interesting.htm

There's No Place Like Home: Cairo's City of the Dead

Home comes in many forms – in Chicago, brick bungalows stand in rows on city streets, New York has apartment buildings that kiss the sky, and Alaskan Inuits may live in igloos. Wherever it is, there's no place like home.

Cairo, home to more than seven million people, the capital of Egypt, and also known as the cradle of civilization, is the largest metropolis in the Middle East. A severe housing shortage has caused millions of poor Egyptians to call the five massive cemeteries adjacent to Cairo home. Known as the City of the Dead, families have taken to living, working, nurturing their children, and creating complete communities among the tombs. The cemeteries of Cairo are dissimilar from American cemeteries as, traditionally, Egyptians buried their dead in larger room-like burial cities where they would mourn their loss for forty days.

Making these tombs into homes has not been that difficult. Electricity is conveyed from local outlying mosques by stringing wires over rooftops. Grave markers are converted to desks and shelves, and rope is strung between gravestones for drying laundry. The problems come with the other creatures with which the residents share living space – cockroaches, mosquitoes, flies, and other vermin. There is also the issue of the stench from garbage heaped up outside their doors.

The main apprehension for the residents is that they are breaking the law so their future is unsure. They maintain, however, that until there is sufficient, appropriate housing, they will stay right where they are. However difficult it is, many of the residents of the City of the Dead will not readily budge. The alternative for many is living on the streets, and they would rather live among the dead where at least they have a home.

Reading Level: 11.0

Dale Chall: 11-12

Sources: Cairo. Retrieved June 30, 2004 from <http://www.ce.eng.usf.edu/pharos/cairo/>

The City of Cairo Egypt. Retrieved June 30, 2004 from <http://www.cairotourist.com/>
alb

Chicago – The Windy, Fast, Murderous City of the Midwest

Chicago, Illinois is nicknamed the Windy City. Michigan Avenue, home to Water Tower Place, Tiffany's, and multiple Gap stores, can be a wind tunnel with people clutching bags and hair as a mighty wind whips down the street. But it did not gain its moniker for the high velocity of winds – the fact is that back in 1893, during the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, *New York Sun* editor Charles Dana, dubbed the city the Windy City because he was tired of hearing Chicagoans boast about the Exposition.

The history of Chicago is full of oddities. For example, the two lions guarding the entrance to the Art Institute were designed by a dentist turned sculptor, Edward L. Kenrys. The first automobile race ever seen in the United States was held in Chicago in 1895 – the winner, J. Frank Duryea, drove an average of 7 ½ miles per hour. On the more macabre side of life, in 1896, Dr. Herman Mudgett built a home at 63rd and Wallace that was designed expressly for the purpose of murder. It was equipped with gas chambers, incinerators, and other horrific devices. On a happy note, Walt Disney was born in Chicago in 1901 and lived there until he was four. Many of us know about the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 in which 250 lives were lost, but in 1903, the Iroquois Theater caught fire during a performance by Eddie Foy – 600 people died that day.

Here's one last little known fact about Chicago. While it was widely believed that Mrs. O'Leary's cow started the Great Chicago fire, on October 7, 1997, the Chicago City Council approved a resolution exonerating this poor cow of all blame.

Reading Level – 12.0

Dale-Chall 11-12

283 words

Source: Chicago Collections. Retrieved June 28, 2004 from

<http://www.corsinet.com/chicago/chicagot.html>

alb

Becoming a 'Star Sailor'

The Greek word for astronaut means 'star sailor' and images of great men like John Glenn orbiting the Earth and Neil Armstrong landing on the moon, make the prospect of becoming an astronaut exciting. Beware, however, that the process begins early, as most astronauts develop a desire for space exploration sometime during elementary or middle school. This desire helps direct their paths toward courses in science, math and engineering in high school and in college. Since there are a large number of applicants for the NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) space program, good grades and high standardized test scores are a must.

Once chosen for the space program, preparation for becoming an astronaut requires many challenges. For example, they learn how to jump from an airplane on both land and sea to prepare for emergencies that may occur as they depart and re-enter the earth's atmosphere and they must also learn how to move about in a weightless environment. On earth, gravity helps us breathe, move our muscles, and helps the blood flow through our veins and arteries. In space, the weightless conditions change all this. Body fluids and blood tend to flow toward the person's head. To correct this, special belts must be worn until the astronaut's body adjusts to being in space. Daily exercise, to counteract the effects of the weightless environment, must be done to strengthen muscles. Astronauts must endure a great deal of training before they can go into space.

Dale Chall 11-12

Bray, B., Jaap, J. and Meyer, P. (1995). *So you want to be an astronaut*. Retrieved July 2, 2004. Website: <http://liftoff.msfc.nasa.gov/academy/astronauts/wannabe.html>

Stott, C. (2000). *Space Exploration*. London: Dorling Kindersley Ltd.

Word count: 289

Flesch-Kincaid: 9.2

The Secrets of Spying

Spying is big business and requires secret methods of obtaining information. A common method still in use today is that of bugs and wiretaps. Bugs, named because of their size, can be set in telephones and clothing to monitor conversations, placed in computers to monitor use and even strategically placed in one's surroundings such as hidden in desk lamps, wall sockets, clocks or plants. For example, while on vacation at Martha's Vineyard several years ago, the Secret Service placed listening devices (bugs) in the woods surrounding President Clinton's vacation home. These sensitive transmitters were able to detect even whispers and helped protect the President.

Secret codes and information are developed and passed in many ways. One woman, during World War I, had a secret message written in invisible ink on her back. Unfortunately for her, the message was discovered and she was executed. During World War II, the Allies dressed an already-dead French civilian as a soldier and planted him with fake papers detailing an Allied attack in Greece. The Germans bought the plan and moved most of their troops. They left the actual target city defenseless.

Because money and power are often the driving forces behind industrial espionage, big businesses and sometimes governments, may encourage it. Car companies and the clothing industry go to great lengths to keep their new lines a secret. Being the first with a new design usually brings both prestige and a lot of money.

Dale Chall 11-12

Platt, R. (1999). *Spy*. London: Dorling Kindersley, Ltd.

Word count: 258

Flesch-Kincaid: 10.2

Pyramids and their Purposes

The great pyramids have always been a source of intrigue for scientists and historians. Usually constructed of high-quality limestone, many of these structures are still standing today. Assembled in a step fashion to represent the sun's rays, it was thought the king would ascend the pyramid and join other gods because the ancient Egyptians considered their pharaoh to be a living god.

The most popular of all the pyramids, the Great Pyramid of Giza, was built more than 4,500 years ago. This pyramid, originally encased in glittering white limestone, was built for King Khufu and his family. The four sides are almost perfectly aligned with true north, south, east and west. The immensity of this structure made it the tallest building in the world until the construction of the Eiffel Tower in 1887. It is also the last visible evidence from the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Composed of secret passages and false doors, the architects of the pyramids tried to keep thieves and grave robbers from stealing the body of their dead king, although every pyramid has been violated and robbed. The center of the pyramid typically contained the sarcophagus, or casket, of the dead pharaoh, and the pyramid was built around it. Chambers and anterooms, sometimes with walls containing stories of their pharaoh, were constructed around the sarcophagus. Scientists also discovered ventilation and escape shafts that allowed the workers to come and go, as well as shafts that lead nowhere to cause confusion for thieves. Although the movies often portray those who built the pyramids as slaves, typically they were farmers who were working their way to heaven. They assumed their pharaoh would look after them when they died.

Dale Chall 11-12

Putnam, J. (2000). *Pyramid*. London: Dorling Kindersley.

Word count: 256

Flesch-Kincaid: 11.2

The World of Espionage

For many people, the word 'spy' conjures up images of James Bond; however, spying or espionage has been going on since the dawn of mankind. Nations vying for more land often sent spies to check out the number and placement of soldiers, and businesses wanting to gain the upper hand tried to infiltrate competitors with moles, to learn their secrets.

Masquerading as merchants, spies moving from one region to another, brought news overheard on ships and in market places. Troubadours, or medieval minstrels, usually traveled from one castle to another under the pretense of entertaining the king, often eavesdropping to gain secrets. Relating this confidential information to the king or ruler of another region brought monetary compensation. Some operatives, or spies, disguise themselves as servants and chauffeurs, working for wealthy entrepreneurs or political leaders. By entrenching themselves within the family unit, daily routine affords them the opportunity to secure intelligence that may be used to bring about the decline of a business or country.

One intriguing part of the spy business concerns the use of gadgets disguised as everyday objects. An ordinary pen may conceal a listening device, and cleverly placed in a pocket or purse, the pen acts as a microphone to transmit information. Cameras the size of a fist, pocketknives that reveal picklocks, and a common hair brush that contains a saw capable of cutting through prison bars, are just some of the paraphernalia used in the world of espionage.

Source: Platt, R. (2000). *Spy*. New York: Dorling Kindersley Publishing, Inc.

Word count: 246

Flesch-Kincaid formula: 12.0

Dale Chall 13-15

John James Audubon was an American wildlife artist. His great ambition was to paint all American species of birds. He was born in 1785 in Haiti and lived for some time in France. Audubon showed an interest in nature and drawing even as a child. Audubon came to the United States in 1803. His family estate outside Philadelphia provided him the opportunity to hunt, study, and draw birds. Audubon participated in bird-banding experiments in North America, learning that the species he had observed always returns to the same nesting sites. Audubon tried his hand at business, continuing to draw and paint only as a hobby. He eventually went bankrupt. So, with nothing to lose, Audubon set off on his quest to paint all the species of birds in America. He took with him only an assistant, a gun, and his artist's tools. His life was extremely difficult.

Audubon's recognition as an artist began in 1826 when he took some of his paintings to England. There, Audubon, "the American Woodsman," became an immediate success. His life-sized, dramatic bird portraits were highly praised. Audubon found a printer to reproduce his paintings in book form, later collaborating with a Scottish ornithologist to provide written descriptions of the bird species. Audubon had achieved fame and financial security, if not wealth. His book, The Birds of America, is still important today. Audubon spent his final years in New York City, dying in 1851.

Audubon's legacy lives on in the Audubon Society, dedicated to bird conservation.

9.2

Dale Chall 9-10

250 Words

10C

Winslow Homer was a self-taught illustrator and painter. His work presents American individuals and nature. Homer was born in Boston in 1836. After a short apprenticeship, Homer achieved both independence and success as a free-lance illustrator for various magazines and newspapers. One interesting assignment by Harper's Weekly in 1861 was to sketch Abraham Lincoln's inauguration. During the Civil War, Homer visited battlefields in Virginia to draw scenes of soldiers' lives both in conflict and in camp. One of his first important oils was Prisoners from the Front (1866), now displayed in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. After he had worked primarily using oils for twenty years, Homer began to paint with watercolors. Throughout the rest of his career, he created important works in each medium. During his life, the United States was undergoing rapid change and urbanization. In contrast, Homer's paintings often featured somewhat old-fashioned scenes of rural life, children, resorts, and women.

However, after experiencing life in an English fishing village during 1881-82, Homer shifted his artistic focus to seascapes. These are probably his best-known subjects. His paintings portray a sea that is both beautiful and powerful. Frequently his work represents a fierce struggle between man and the sea, between man and nature. One such masterpiece is Eight Bells (1886). His later works are both heroic and thought provoking. Homer found artistic inspiration in his travels from Quebec to Cuba, from the Adirondacks to Florida. His main studio remained in remote Prout's Neck, Maine, where he died in 1910.

10.4

Dale Chall 11-12

250 Words

Andrew Wyeth, one of America's best-known and best-loved artists, was born in 1917, the youngest child of painter N.C. Wyeth. No longer attending school after third grade because he was so prone to illness, Wyeth was taught and trained at home by his father, who had himself established a reputation as an illustrator of children's books like Treasure Island and Robinson Crusoe. Wyeth displayed a notable and precocious artistic talent, mounting his first one-man show when he was only twenty. His celebrated career has spanned over sixty years. The exhibition of Wyeth's work at the National Gallery of Art was particularly significant because this venue had never before featured the work of a living artist.

Wyeth's paintings display diversity in media, style, and subject matter. Although he has used egg tempera for textural effect, he has worked more extensively in watercolor. He remarks that watercolor reflects best the austerity he often intends to communicate. Critics note that his style has evolved from realistic images to surrealistic expressionism. Wyeth himself characterizes his style, particularly in his winter scenes, as "not romantic." He often aspires to evoke, in his words, "lonely bleakness," "quiet," and "chill reality." His favorite locales include Maine landscapes and his winter home in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. His favorite human subjects are his wife Betsy and his neighbor's German nurse, the inspiration for his acclaimed Helga series. Almost everyone recognizes at least one Wyeth by either sight or name; the poignant reality of a Christina's World (1948) is unforgettable.

11.3

Dale Chall 13-15

250 Words

Georgia O'Keeffe is the best-known of American women painters. She was born in 1887. Her family encouraged her to be independent and well-educated. She declared early her desire to become an artist and began private lessons at age eleven. Her studies at the Art Institute of Chicago were interrupted by illness. She resumed her education in New York. Without her permission, a friend submitted samples of O'Keeffe's work to the avant-garde photographer, Alfred Steiglitz. This introduction began a lasting professional, and personal relationship, with Steiglitz. He sponsored and managed her work until his death. The two artists lived together for several years. They eventually married when O'Keeffe was twenty-three and Steiglitz, fifty-four. The predominant subjects of O'Keeffe's paintings were flowers. Her vivid depictions of flowers are neither sedate nor domesticated. Rather, her brilliantly-colored and stylized flowers expand to occupy whole canvases. After visiting New Mexico, O'Keeffe became captivated by the light and images of the Southwest. She created surreal images of adobe buildings, desert panoramas, and floating cow skulls. Declaring her desire to live to 125, O'Keeffe helped prepare a retrospective of her work for the Metropolitan Museum. In 1986, however, she died at age ninety-eight.

Dale Chall 11-12

Flesch-Kincaid 11.8

196 Words

Jonas Salk

Jonas Salk was born in New York City on October 28, 1914. His parents were immigrants who did not have a formal education. They were determined to see their children succeed. Jonas Salk was the first member of his family to go to college. He wanted to study law, but he also had an interest in medical science. He attended medical school at New York University. While there he spent a year studying the flu virus. After finishing medical school, he returned to the study of the flu virus. World War II had begun. Public health experts feared a repeat of the flu that had killed millions during the First World War. The creation of flu vaccines stopped the spread of flu.

In 1947, after eight long years of work, Salk developed a vaccine against polio, a virus that caused paralysis. And in 1955, Salk's research paid off as human trials of the polio vaccine were found to protect subjects from the polio virus. Salk was looked upon as a miracle worker. Salk refused to patent his vaccine. He did not want to make money from the discovery. Rather, he wished to see the vaccine provided to the largest number of people possible. He spent his final years searching for a vaccine to fight AIDS.

Flesch Kincaid: 8.0
Dale-Chall 9-10 and 111-2
215 words

Mary Cassatt

Mary Cassatt, a famous artist, was born in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania. She spent her childhood in Europe with her family and at age 16 she returned to America to attend the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. She also studied in Paris where she copied the great works of earlier artists. When she was 22, Cassatt began private art lessons. She enjoyed painting with bright colors. The world renowned Paris Salon, an annual art exhibition chosen by jury, refused to acknowledge her paintings unless she agreed to tone them down. Finally, she did a painting of a girl playing a Mandolin. It was recognized by the Paris Salon.

Later, she became friends with Edgar Degas. He influenced her style and encouraged her to exhibit with the Impressionists, artists who painted in a particular style. She became a strong supporter of the Impressionists. Cassatt created scenes of everyday life. She painted images of mothers and children. She was good at drawing and printmaking. Some of her best works were created in pastel. Through her friendships with wealthy private collectors, she promoted Impressionism in America and had a lasting influence on American art. Cassatt moved to Chicago, Illinois where most of her best works were destroyed in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.

Cassatt moved to Spain where she received an invitation to join the Impressionist group. Later, Cassatt refused to attend the Impressionists' show in order to protest the group's refusal to let in new people. In 1915, Cassatt stopped working because of poor eyesight and she finally passed away on June 14, 1926 at the age of 82.

Dale Chall- 9-10
Flesh-Kincaid 10.0
267 Words

Henry David Thoreau

Henry David Thoreau was born in Concord, Massachusetts and graduated from Harvard University. He taught school for years before deciding to become a poet. From 1841-1843, Thoreau lived in the home of the famous philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson. Thoreau began to publish pieces in the magazine titled, *The Dial*. In the years between 1845 and 1847, he lived in a hut beside Walden Pond. Essays recording his daily life were written in his work, *Walden* which describes his feelings toward nature and non-materialism. While living at Walden Pond, he spent much of his time studying nature and meditating. Thoreau supported himself with jobs such as gardening and carpentry in the local area. Emerson joined Thoreau at Walden Pond from 1847-1848.

Thoreau's *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* was the only other book he published during his lifetime. In another work, he described a night he spent in jail protesting the Mexican-American War. It was called "Civil Disobedience." Thoreau explained why he chose to go to jail rather than pay a poll tax, which paid for the Mexican War. This essay later inspired such figures as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, twentieth-century leaders for civil change through nonviolence. After his death, Thoreau's collected writings were published in 20 volumes, and other writings continued to appear in print.

Flesh-Kincaid 11.4
Chall 11-12
219 Words

Albert Einstein

Albert Einstein was born in Germany. He was born on March 14, 1879. In 1896, he studied at the Swiss Federal Polytechnic School in Zurich. He studied physics and mathematics. He was not able to find a teaching position. He became a junior examiner at the Swiss patent office in 1902. He began creating the work that laid the foundation for twentieth-century physics.

During his work at the Patent Office, Einstein produced much of his amazing work. He was a professor before serving as director of Berlin's Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in 1914. In 1915, he published his general theory of relativity. He received a Nobel Prize in 1921 for his work about the photoelectric effect. In 1933, he gave up his German citizenship for political reasons. He traveled to America to take the position of Professor of Physics at Princeton. Einstein was a part of the World Government Movement. He was offered the Presidency of the State of Israel. He turned it down. He then worked with another professor in beginning the Hebrew University.

Einstein helped develop quantum field theory and he worked to discover the mathematical relationship between electromagnetism and gravitation. Einstein believed the finding would be a first step toward discovering the common laws governing the universe. Einstein had difficulty putting together a unified theory. His theories of relativity and gravitation represent a big advance over Newtonian physics and transformed scientific and philosophical study.

Flesh-Kincaid 12.0

Dale-Chall 11-12

236 words