Passage #1 – Chemical and Physical Changes
All matter, all things can be changed in two ways: chemically and physically. Both chemical and physical changes affect the state of matter. Physical changes are those that do not change the make-up or identity of the matter. For example, clay will bend or flatten if squeezed, but it will still be clay. Changing the shape of clay is a physical change, and does not change the matter’s identity. Chemical changes turn the matter into a new kind of matter with different properties. For example, when paper is burnt, it becomes ash and will never be paper again. The difference between them is that physical changes are temporary or only last for a little while, and chemical changes are permanent, which means they last forever. Physical and chemical changes both affect the state of matter.

Passage #2 – Save the Tigers
Dr. Miller doesn’t want the tigers to vanish. These majestic beasts are disappearing at an alarming rate. Dr. Miller thinks that we should write to our congress people. If we let them know that we demand the preservation of this species, maybe we can make a difference. Dr. Miller also thinks that we should donate to Save the Tigers. Our donations will help to support and empower those who are fighting the hardest to preserve the tigers. We owe it to our grandchildren to do something.

Passage #3 – The Great Recession
Many people are confused about why our economy went to shambles in 2008. The crisis was actually the result of a combination of many complex factors. First, easy credit conditions allowed people who were high-risk or unworthy of credit to borrow, and even people who had no income were eligible for large loans. Second, banks would bundle these toxic loans and sell them as packages on the financial market. Third, large insurance firms backed these packages, misrepresenting these high-risk loans as safe investments. Fourth, because of the ease of acquiring credit and the rapid growth in the housing market, people were buying two or three houses, intending to sell them for more than they paid. All of these factors created bubbles of speculation. These bubbles burst, sending the whole market into a downward spiral, causing employers to lose capital and lay off employees. Consumer spending then plummeted and most businesses suffered. The economy is like a big boat, and once it gets moving quickly in the wrong direction, it’s hard to turn it around.

Passage #4 – Screen Protector
Before applying the screen protector, clean the surface of your phone’s screen with a soft cloth. Once the surface of your screen is clean, remove the paper backing on the screen protector. Evenly apply the sticky side of the screen protector to your phone’s screen. Smooth out any air bubble trapped on between the protector and the phone screen. Enjoy the added protection.
Passage #5 - Vicious Predators
The Cretaceous Period was filled with dangerous predators, but two of the most feared hunters were the tyrannosaurus rex and the velociraptor. The tyrannosaurus rex was one of the largest carnivores to ever walk the Earth. He was 20 feet tall and weighed seven tons. His jaws could crush down with 3,000 lbs. of force, enough to smash the bones of his prey. The velociraptor was very small compared to rex. Raptors only stood three feet tall and were seven feet long, weighing merely 35 pounds. But the velociraptor was fast. Scientists think that raptors could run 24 miles per hour and turn on a dime. Both dinosaurs used their jaws to kill prey, but the raptor had a secret weapon: a retractable toe claw that he pulled out like a knife to slash at his prey. Both dinosaurs had eyes on the front of their heads, which helped them track prey. If these two dinosaurs had fought, it would be difficult to say which would win; however since raptors died over ten million years before the first tyrannosaurus was born, scientists don’t believe such a fight ever occurred.

Passage #6 - Creating a Dinosaur Sculpture
Materials: pipe cleaners, clay, non-toxic paint
Wouldn’t you like a scary dinosaur model on your desk to protect your pencils and textbooks? You can easily make one by following these simple directions. First, bend your to make the frame of your dinosaur. I suggest you create a tyrannosaurus frame by using one long pipe cleaner as his neck, spine, and tail, and then bend another into a u-shape to make his feet. Wrap the feet around the spine piece. Next, roll out clay to wrap around the pipe cleaners. Let the clay dry overnight. The next day you may want to paint your dinosaur using non-toxic paint. His eyes should be white, but feel free to color your dinosaur as you wish. Nobody really knows how dinosaurs were colored, so don’t let anyone tell you that your dinosaur can’t be pink. Lastly, put him on your desk and watch as he or she scares away bullies and pencil thieves.

Passage #7 - What Happened to the Dinosaurs?
There are many theories about why the dinosaurs vanished from the planet. One theory that many people believe is that a gigantic meteorite smashed into the Earth. Scientists believe that the meteorite was very big and that the impact may have produced a large dust cloud that covered the Earth for many years. The dust cloud may have caused plants to not receive sunlight and the large plant eaters, or herbivores, may have died off, followed by the large meat eaters, or carnivores. This theory may or may not be true, but it is one explanation as to why these giant reptiles no longer inhabit the Earth.

Passage #8 - Fossil Mishap
It’s important to think critically about the information that you receive, or else you may be led astray. For example, the brontosaurus is a type of dinosaur that never really existed. Many people still believe in the brontosaurus today, but the “brontosaurus” is actually the body of an apatosaurus with the head of a camarasaurus. This concocted creature was made from two mismatched fossils. Had more people thought critically about these findings, analyzing the components that were presented, entire generations of school children may not have been misinformed; therefore, think critically about the information that people tell you, even if it’s information you find on a book or in a worksheet. Keep these problems in mind when conducting your studies.
Passage #9 - Tectonic Plates
The surface of the Earth is divided into pieces called “tectonic plates.” These plates move. When the plates rub against each other, they do not move smoothly. When the plates do not move smoothly, earthquakes result. Some parts of the world get more earthquakes than other parts. The parts of the earth that get most earthquakes are near the edges of these plates.

Passage #10 - Earthquake Proofing
Some countries, such as Japan, or parts of a country, like California in the United States, have a lot of earthquakes. In these places it is a good practice to build houses and other buildings so they will not collapse when there is an earthquake. This is called seismic design or "earthquake-proofing".

Passage #11 - Building for Earthquakes
The ability of a building to withstand the stress of an earthquake depends upon its type of construction, shape, mass distribution, and rigidity. Different combinations are used. To reduce stress, first, the building's ground floor must be flexible. One method is to support the ground floor with extremely rigid, hollow columns, while the rest of the building is supported by flexible columns located inside the hollow columns. A different method is to use rollers or rubber pads to separate the base columns from the ground, allowing the columns to shake parallel during an earthquake. Next, the outdoor walls should be made with stronger and more reinforced materials such as steel or reinforced concrete. Then, to help prevent collapsing, the roof should be made out of light-weight materials.

Passage #12 - Hurricanes and Tornadoes
A hurricane is a large storm with heavy winds and rain that begins in the ocean and builds up strength as it moves across the water. While some of the damage caused by hurricanes is from high winds, most of it is usually from tidal surge, flooding entire cities, and killing large numbers of people. A tornado is a storm that develops on land, with no warning, and moves in a circular motion with heavy winds with a funnel shape, picking up and carrying dirt, dust, and even objects. The damage caused by tornadoes is from the high velocity winds, which are extremely destructive and deadly. They can demolish entire neighborhoods in a matter of a few seconds to a few minutes. Tornadoes can form when hurricanes make landfall, as their winds at ground level slow down, while the winds near the top keep their momentum, but a hurricane cannot be created by a tornado.

Passage #13 - Stopping a Fire
Fire needs three things to burn: oxygen, fuel, and heat. Fuels can be wood, tinder, coal, or any other substance that will easily oxidize. Therefore, a fire can be stopped in three different ways, by removing any of the three things it needs to burn.

The fuel can be removed. If a fire burns through all of its fuel and extra nearby fuel is removed, the fire will stop burning.

The oxygen can be removed. This is called "smothering" a fire. Fires cannot burn in a vacuum or if they are covered in carbon dioxide.

The heat can be removed. The most common way to remove heat is to use water to absorb that heat, putting the fire out.
Passage #14: Volcanoes
Have you ever wondered what the inside of a volcano looks like? Deep underground is a magma chamber. The magma chamber is under the bedrock of the earth’s crust. The conduit or pipe runs from the magma chamber to the top of the volcano. The conduit connects the magma chamber to the surface. Most volcanoes also have a crater at the top. Volcanoes are quite a sight, and you can enjoy this site all over the universe. Volcanoes are found on planets other than Earth, like the Olympus Mons on Mars.

Passage #15 - Floods
When a river receives a lot of extra water it may flood. During a flood there is plenty of water, and most people wouldn’t think that dehydration was a serious risk, but flood waters are mostly polluted and not safe to drink. People who drink the contaminated water may suffer from illnesses or diseases such as typhoid. You can prepare for flooding by filling many containers with fresh clean drinking water. You can also use sandbags to protect your house and to soak up the water. Be prepared and be safe.

Passage #16 - Lightning
Lightning and thunder are related events. Lightning is a sudden, violent flash of electricity that occurs between a cloud and the ground or between two clouds in the sky. A lightning bolt can be several miles long and can be straight or forked. It is very hot, with an average temperature of 34 000 degrees Celsius. This causes the air around the electric bolt to expand, producing lots of sound energy. It is this sound energy that we hear as thunder. So, lightning and thunder are caused by the same event, but lightning is light energy, or electromagnetic energy, whereas thunder is sound energy. Thus, we see lightning and hear thunder.

Passage #17 - Tsunamis
Tsunamis are very long waves in the ocean, sometimes hundreds of miles long. Tsunamis usually start suddenly. They may begin as normal waves and change to big waves very quickly. After this change, tsunami waves will travel at great speed across the ocean with little energy loss. Just before they hit land, the water will draw back off of the coast. If the slope of the coast is shallow, the water may pull back for many hundreds of feet. People who are unaware of the danger may be drawn by this strange site and remain on the shore. When the tsunami finally hits, it may remove sand from beaches, destroy trees, damage houses and even destroy whole towns. Tsunamis are tremendously powerful.

Passage #18 - Avalanches
Avalanches (when a lot of snow falls from a mountain) may bury people under them. If the people are not found rapidly enough by rescue teams they will die of suffocation (not getting enough air) or of hypothermia (freezing cold). The chance of surviving an avalanche is as follows: 92% if found within 15 minutes, 30% if found within 35 minutes (victims die of suffocation), nearly zero after two hours (victims die of injuries and hypothermia).
Passage #19 - White Pizza
Most people have had red pizza, or pizza covered with red sauce, but have you ever had white pizza? White pizza is made in almost the same way as red pizza: the dough rises and is rolled out, toppings are applied, and it is cooked in an oven—but the key difference is that white pizza does not have any tomato sauce on it. Instead, a white pizza may have olive oil or no sauce at all. I like white pizza more than red pizza because you can really taste the ingredients. Adding some fresh tomatoes to a white pizza will give it that tomato flavor without the completely overwhelming taste of the red sauce that covers most pizzas. If you have not had a white pizza, I recommend that you order or make one today.

Passage #20 - Pizza Dough
The foundation of every pizza is the crust, and good crust comes from good dough. You might be surprised to learn that pizza dough is made from nothing more than flour, water, yeast, olive oil, salt, and sometimes sugar. Start by adding your yeast packet to a cup of warm water. Let the yeast activate, and then add two cups of flour, two tablespoons of olive oil, two teaspoons of sugar, and a teaspoon of salt. Mix all of that together and wait half an hour for the dough to rise. Now you're ready to roll it out!

Passage #21 - Pizza Stone
Cooking the perfect pizza at home can be quite a challenge. You may find that it's difficult to get your oven to the right temperature. If the oven is too hot the crust will burn, become hard, and taste bad. If your oven isn't hot enough, the crust may get soggy. Even at the perfect temperature, extra moisture from your ingredients may prevent the bottom of the crust from fully cooking, but don't let oven temperature stop you from building the pizza of your dreams. Get yourself a pizza stone. A pizza stone will get very hot when preheated and will allow your crust to fully cook without burning it. Then you can pile the ingredients on your pizza and have a crispy crust that isn't burned. That's the way to go.

Passage #22 - Pizza and Health
Pizza is often viewed as a junk food, and it is true that some pizzas are high in salt, fat, and calories, but there may also be some benefit to eating pizza. Some studies have found that lycopene, an antioxidant that exists in tomato products that are often used in pizza, may prevent some forms of cancer. Dr. Silvano Gallus, of the Mario Negri Institute for Pharmaceutical Research in Milan, studied the eating habits of people who developed cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and colon. He concluded that people who ate pizza at least once a week had significantly less chance of developing these cancers. Here's to your health.
Passage #23 - The Perfect Pizza
If you ask me, the perfect pizza has a thin crust, but not too thin. Even though I’m from Chicago, I prefer the New York style crust. Your perfect pizza might have tomato sauce on it, but mine has pesto on top of the crust. On the pesto I’d like to see lots of cheese: a full layer of shredded mozzarella and Romano cheese, and on top of the shredded mozzarella, I’d like to see some slices of fresh mozzarella. Now you might think I’m crazy for this one, but I’d really like to see some goat cheese in the crust. To top it all off, I’d like to see it polka-dotted with pepperoni slices.

Passage #24 - Frozen Pizza
You’d think that making a frozen pizza would be as easy as rolling out some dough, dropping some ingredients on it, and freezing it, but it’s actually a lot more complicated than that. Some of the challenges in creating a good frozen pizza include the sauce combining with the dough and the crust becoming rigid after it is frozen and reheated. To prevent the sauce from combining with the crust, you can use a layer of modified cornstarch as a moisture barrier between the sauce and the crust. This will prevent the crust from absorbing the sauce. Additionally, partially baking the dough and other ingredients will keep the dough from becoming too rigid after it is frozen and reheated. On second thought, you’re probably better off not trying this at home.

Passage #25 - Jimmy’s Pizza
Jimmy’s pizzeria is my favorite pizza place in the city, but you wouldn’t be able to tell that just by looking at the outside. It is an inconspicuous brown brick building. It doesn’t even have a sign, just the name of the establishment in three-inch letters on the storefront window. The inside isn’t much to speak of either. There are some chrome swivel stools along a laminate countertop that makes an L shape, separating the register and kitchen area from the dining area. Booth seating lines the eating area of the restaurant area and a few favorable reviews from local publications are framed and displayed on the walls. Yeah, the aesthetics of the place are a little underwhelming, but forget the scenery. I go to Jimmy’s for the pizza.

Passage #26 - Pizza Styles
Almost everybody loves pizza, but try to get a group of people to agree on a pizza order and you’ll quickly find that not everybody likes their pizza the same way. Perhaps such disagreements led to the many distinct pizza styles that can currently be found in America. These pizza styles are currently categorized by region and three of the most popular pizza styles are the New York-style, the Chicago-style, and the Detroit-style. All of these pizza styles contain dough, sauce, cheese, and other toppings, but it’s the way that these ingredients are utilized that gives them their unique regional flair. The New York-style pizza is thin. New York-style slices are cut into large triangles that can be folded and this pizza is commonly sold by the slice. Chicago-style pizza is marked by its deep dish crust, which can be up to three inches tall at the edge. Toppings are heavily applied to these pizzas, as is characteristic of the style, and they are generally sold as whole pies rather than slices. Then there’s the Detroit-style pizza, which is not circular like the Chicago and New York-style pizzas, but square like the Sicilian-style pizzas. The Detroit-style pizza is similar to the Chicago-style pizza in that these pizzas both have thick crusts, but the Detroit-style pizza is twice-baked, giving it a chewy crust that is crispy around the edges. Pizza styles in America may vary greatly by region, but they are all delicious if you ask me.
Passage #27 - Free Pizza
Getting a free pizza from Mortini’s Pizza Parlor is as easy as pie, pizza pie. You’ll see. Start by placing your order. I suggest that you choose a white, New York style pizza with lots of cheese, but you can get whatever floats your boat. After placing your order, wait until your pizza comes. It may take thirty minutes to an hour (longer on Super Bowl Sunday). When your pizza finally arrives, pay your deliver driver. Don’t forget to tip. Then, eat your pizza, or just throw it away. We’re fine with either. But before you throw it away, grab the coupon off the top of the box and save it in a drawer. Collect ten of these coupons and the next time you place your order from Mortini’s Pizza Parlor, you can redeem them for a free pizza. Now you see, getting a free pizza from Mortini’s is as easy as eating pizza.

Passage #28 - Hurricanes and Tornadoes
Hurricanes and tornados are both amazing yet deadly natural phenomena. Both generate deadly conditions, but in different ways. Tornados are likely to damage people and property with their high winds, which go up to 300 miles per hour, but hurricanes are generally more feared for their flooding. Also, hurricanes can produce tornados, which makes them quite dangerous indeed.

Passage #29 - Causes of Tornadoes
No one knows exactly what causes tornados, but some scientists believe that when warm air meets cold air, a tornado may form. The reason for this is that the warm air is lighter than the cold air, so it rises up fast and meets different winds moving different directions. Under the right conditions, this can cause a tornado. Though there is still much mystery surrounding tornados, many people believe that when warm moist air meets cool dry air, tornados can result.

Passage #30 - The Twist
The twist is a dance inspired by rock and roll music. To do the Twist, first stand with your feet approximately shoulder width apart. The torso may be squared to the knees and hips, or turned at an angle so one foot is farther forward than the other. Then, hold your arms out from your body, bent at your elbow. Next, rotate your hips, torso, and legs as a single unit with your arms staying more or less stationary. Every so often lift one leg off of the floor for styling. Now you’re doing the twist!

Passage #31 - Dance
There are many reasons why people dance. Some people dance for fun, just because they enjoy dancing. At other times, people dance for exercise or for weight loss, because dancing can really get your heart beating. Also, sometimes people dance to try to get boyfriends or girlfriends. Some people think that good dancing is attractive. There are many reasons why people dance.
Passage #32 - Why Do We Have Schools?
Education in our society serves many purposes, but there are three main functions. First, students learn skills that will help prepare them for society. Writing, reading, and mathematics are essential in today’s workplace and many people learn these skills in school. Second, schools serve communities. Whether by functioning as polling locations during elections, or providing safe havens for students in temporary living situations, public schools add value to communities. Third, public schools provide a structured environment for children to engage in productive activities during many days of the year while their adult caretakers may be working. In other words, public schools also provide day care. These are three of the primary reasons why we have schools in our society.

Passage #33 - Have a Great Day
There is more than one way to have a successful school day, but a great way is to be well prepared. The first thing you should do is complete your homework the night before. Don’t try to do your work in the morning, it will be too stressful and you may not have enough time. Next, you need to go to bed at a reasonable time. If you stay up too late, you will not be able to focus on assignments or instruction as well and you may even fall asleep during class. Lastly, you should wake up early. This will give you time to get ready and feel good about yourself, and you’ll also be able to get something to eat before the day begins. So remember, one way to have a successful school day is to do your homework the night before, go to bed early, and wake up early. Have a great day.

Passage #34 - Attendance
Having good attendance is important because attendance determines the school's funding. Some students have poor attendance, and the school has tried many ways of addressing this: teachers have talked to parents on the phone and the school has mailed letters. Yet, some students still maintain poor attendance. Next, the staff will attempt to schedule parent/teacher/administrator conferences with students who are habitually absent. Hopefully, this will help more students get to school everyday.

Passage #35 - Are Charter Schools Harder Schools?
These days, students and their caretakers have more choices when it comes to selecting a public school. In addition to the traditional neighborhood schools, Charter schools have popped up in major cities across the country. Both charter schools and neighborhood schools fill traditional roles like providing instruction, serving lunch and other meals, and administering the state tests. But charter schools and neighborhood schools differ in many important ways. One key difference is the amount of time students spend in school. In Chicago, students who attend neighborhood schools do so for around 180 days in a year, and each day is slightly over six hours long. On the contrary, students who attend charter schools do so for around 200 days in a year, and most charter school days are over eight hours long. While both neighborhood and charter schools provide free public education to students meeting enrollment criteria, students who attend charter schools spend much more time in class.
Passage #36 - Divisions
The Revolutionary War was a time of great division. Americans were split into two groups: Patriots and Loyalists. Patriots were Americans who supported the struggle for independence. They believed that Americans should be free from the control of an English king. They fought against the English to establish a new government in America. Loyalists were Americans who remained loyal to the crown. Some of them were happy under English rule. Others believed that they might be rewarded after the Americans lost the war. Though both Patriots and Loyalists lived in America, a deep division ran between them.

Passage #37 - The Turning Point
There were many important battles in the Revolutionary War, but perhaps none were more important than the Battles of Saratoga. The results of the Battles of Saratoga shifted the momentum of the war toward the Americans. Though they had previously lost numerous battles, the Americans captured British General Burgoyne’s army during the Battles of Saratoga. This victory convinced other countries, especially France, that the Americans could win the war. Because of this, not only did France declare war on England, but other nations also began openly supporting the American fight for independence. The Battles of Saratoga will be remembered as a pivotal moment in this fight.

Passage #38 - Guerilla Warfare
In most cases American soldiers could not stand toe-to-toe against British soldiers. The British were better trained, better armed, and more experienced. When the American soldiers attempted to match the British, they suffered heavy losses. The Americans had to use what advantages they had, so they developed what are now known as Guerilla Warfare tactics. Guerrilla warfare is a form of fighting where small groups of fighters use ambushes, sabotages, and the elements of surprise to harass a larger, less mobile army. By using Guerilla Warfare tactics, American soldiers were able to equalize some of the British's advantages on the battlefield.

Passage #39 - Fire Cake
American soldiers during the Revolutionary War suffered horrible conditions to win independence. You can experience some of these conditions by eating the same food that soldiers ate at Valley Forge: fire cake. Fire cake is a horrible tasting blob of burnt gluten. To make some first mix flour with water until you get thick, damp dough. Then, form it into a cake and in your palms. Put this doughy lump on a greased cookie sheet and bake it until it is brown. This will be very similar to the awful fire cakes that American soldiers ate at Valley Forge. Enjoy!
Passage #40 - Market Leaders
Most mobile phones sold today have an operating system that was either designed by Apple or Google. Apple makes the iOS operating system powering their iPhones and iPads. Google makes the Android operating system that can be found on many different mobile phones and tablets. Both of these operating systems allow users to connect to app stores and download applications. To launch these applications, users press small square buttons that appear on their home screens. One major difference between these two operating systems is that Apple makes all of its own hardware. That is to say, the iOS operating system only appears on products created by Apple. On the other hand, many different manufacturers like Samsung, Sony, and LG use the Android operating system. Which one do you like better: Android or iOS?

Passage #41 - Downloading Apps
Getting a new phone is a really cool feeling, but your phone can’t do much without applications. In order to get the most from your new phone, you need to download apps. To do this you will need a data connection. Some plans allow you to get data from your phone network. If your plan lets you to do this, you can connect to web services anywhere that your phone gets a signal. If your plan does not let you to do this, you will need to connect your device to a Wi-Fi network. Free Wi-Fi can be found at coffee shops, laundry mats, and other public locations. Once your phone is receiving data, go to the application store on the device. Use the search or browse functions to find fun, interesting, or useful programs. Once you have found an application that you want to try, click the button to download and install it on your device. Not all applications are free, so make sure that you know how much the app costs before agreeing to download it. Also, if you are under the age of 18, get your parent’s permission before downloading anything. You’ll like your new phone so much more once you have some cool apps.

Passage #42 - Lost and Found
A mobile phone is lost every second by some estimates. A 2011 survey shows that about 22% of Americans have lost a mobile phone. When a person loses their phone, they don’t just lose a device that may have cost as much as $600, they lose phone numbers, photos, and sensitive information. If the phone isn’t locked and it gets lost or stolen, someone may use it to commit identity theft. Perhaps the worst part about this is that it can be prevented. Today’s smart phones have free applications that allow you to find your lost phone using GPS signals. Even if you cannot retrieve your phone, you can use these applications to delete your data so that you are less likely to become a victim of identity theft. Losing your phone feels horrible, but if you take the time to install a phone-finding app, you’ll be much better prepared to deal with it.
Passage #43 - Eyes on the Road
For better or worse, mobile phones are changing the world; however, one place where phones are definitely making things worse is on the road. Today it is common for motorists to play with their mobile phones while driving. Drivers may get bored or impatient while waiting in traffic and use their smart phones to pass the time by checking sports scores, stock numbers, or news stories. Worse still, they may engage in text messaging. Some drivers are so used to receiving and responding to communications immediately that it does not occur to them to wait until an appropriate time to respond. As soon as they get a message, these drivers will try to read and respond to it. There are many reasons why people use cell phones while driving, but none of them are good reasons.

Passage #44 - Difficult Decisions
Since I made honor roll every quarter this year, my mom is going to buy me a new phone for my birthday. I can’t decide whether I want to get an iPhone or a Galaxy. They are both really cool phones, and they cost about the same, but they are also different in a lot of ways too, like the Galaxy has a bigger screen. The iPhone’s screen isn’t small or anything, it’s just not as big as the Galaxy’s. However, the iPhone connects with my iTunes account. All of my music is already uploaded to iTunes, so all I have to do is sync my phone and then I can listen to all of my music. That’d be cool. But if I got the Galaxy, I could use Google Play to upload my old songs and buy new ones. This would give me a chance to go through my old music collection. That’d be cool too. I’m not sure which one I’m going to get but I’m super pumped about it either way. Maybe if you make honor roll every quarter next year, you can get a new phone too. It’s worth a shot.

Passage #45 - Cats in Ancient Egypt
You might think that cats get a ridiculous amount of attention from people today but that’s nothing compared to how they were treated in ancient Egypt. Since cats were believed to represent the Egyptian war goddess Bastet, the ancient Egyptians literally worshipped cats. Their admiration was expressed in ways that we might find funny or shocking today. They liked cats so much that killing a cat in ancient Egypt, even on accident, was punishable by death. The Greek historian Herodotus wrote that when a cat passed away, the household would go into mourning as though a member of the family had died. Family members would even shave off their eyebrows to show their loss. Another way in which ancient Egyptians showed love and respect for cats was through mummification. Cats were often mummified after dying, a process normally reserved for kings and nobles. Hundreds of thousands of cat mummies have been found preserved in and around Egypt. So the next time you see someone fawning over a cat video on YouTube, remember that it could be worse.
Passage #46 - Get a Cat
Have you ever seen a mouse or rat in or around your home? If so, you may have a rodent infestation. Mice and rats are considered pests since they steal food from people. They are hard to get rid of because they move quickly and they hide in walls and other tight places that are difficult for people to reach. These pests make poor house guests, but you don’t have to live with them any longer. You can give them the boot without bringing any poisons in to your home. You can do this by getting a cat: nature’s remedy for a rodent problem. Cats have very sharp senses and lightning quick reflexes. They are excellent hunters. It is estimated that cats kill between 10 and 20 billion small mammals annually. Not only will a cat help to solve your issue with rodents, they will also kill any small birds that they can catch. So rather than sharing your home with a greedy mouse or a filthy rat, share it with a cat.

Passage #47 - Like Dogs and Cats...
There are two types of people in this world: cat people and dog people. Which type are you? Well, if you like a pet that is low maintenance, you might be a cat person. Cats are easier to take care of than dogs because cats are very independent. Since they use litter boxes, they do not have to be taken outside to go potty like dogs. Also, cats clean themselves while dogs need occasional baths. If you prefer a pet that requires more attention, you may be a dog person. Most dogs are very loyal and obedient. You can play games like fetch or tug of war with a dog. Dogs will also alert you when someone is outside of your home, whereas cats will usually just stay quiet. Both cats and dogs like to be petted, and they both make excellent pets, but it takes a certain kind of person to own them. Which kind of person are you?

Passage #48 - Dangerous Predators
Cats may seem like cute and cuddly companions, but to birds and other small mammals, cats are highly lethal killing machines. Even well fed cats may hunt and kill many small animals such as birds, mice, and reptiles. Small animals are most at risk when cats are introduced to areas that have not hosted them before. Since they are not used to living with the threatening cats, these small animals are naïve and vulnerable. If they do not have the defenses to survive, cats will hunt these animals until they are wiped out completely. Cats have played a leading role in the extinction of many small animals, including the Hawaiian Rail and at least 22 other species of bird. While other things may have led to the destruction of these species, cat attacks were a main factor.
Passage #49 - Herding Cats
Cats are known for their independence. They may be difficult to train, but that doesn't mean that you can't teach an old cat new tricks. It's time to learn how to teach your cat to fetch. First, find a toy or object that your cat likes. It is much easier to keep your cat's attention if you use something in which he or she is already interested. Next, throw the toy a short distance. If your cat chases the toy, you are off to a good start. Wait until the cat returns the toy and reward the cat with a treat when he or she does. Continue doing this for as long as your cat shows interest in the toy: toss it, wait for the cat to return it, and then reward the cat. As your cat gets better at this trick, slowly increase how far you throw the toy. It may take some time, but with a little dedication and a lot of patience you can teach your cat a cool trick that he or she will do whenever he or she feels like it.

Passage #50 - Declawing
Cats can be great pets but they're not perfect. Some cats destroy household items with their claws. Or they may use their claws to scratch people’s faces if they feel threatened. Small children are the ones most often attacked by cats. These attacks can leave lasting scars. Don’t worry though: you don’t have to get rid of your cat just because she can’t keep her claws to herself. You can get your cat an onychectomy. An onychectomy is when a cat's claws are surgically removed. This is commonly called declawing the cat. If you get your cat declawed, he or she will still continue to swipe its paws at people and things, but the attacks will be harmless. Some people worry that declawed cats are vulnerable against attacks by raccoons and other animals that the cats might encounter outdoors. People with these concerns should only have their cat's front claws removed, which leaves the cat with a defense if he or she is seriously attacked but also protects people and household items.

Passage #51 - How Fireworks Work
What’s that in the sky? Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it’s a firework! Fireworks capture the attention of crowds around the world, but how do they work? First, the firework is stuffed into a tube loaded with gunpowder. This is the mortar. Second, a fuse that leads to the mortar is lit. When the fuse ignites the gunpowder in the mortar, an explosion launches the firework into the air. A fuse on the firework is lit at the same time as the mortar fuse, but this fuse burns slower, allowing the firework to get into the air before it explodes. After it has risen to its peak, the firework should explode, causing tiny pieces of metal to burn in different colors as they scatter outward. Oooooh!

Passage #52 - Misusing Fireworks
Fireworks are beautiful; but as with many beautiful things, they are also dangerous. Misusing fireworks can result in property damage, injury, and even the loss of life. Such accidents usually happen for one of two reasons. The operators may be using poorly manufactured products, such as fireworks with fuses that burn too quickly. A defective firework can cause even the most skilled operator to have an accident. Other times, however, it is the operator who is at fault. The operator may be unskilled or distracted and make a mistake, such as setting up an explosion sequence improperly or not accounting for conditions in the environment, like soundproof foaming. For these reasons even the most beautiful fireworks display can turn really ugly really quickly.
Passage #53 - Firework Injuries
There is an increase in firework related injuries every year around the Fourth of July. Emergency rooms around the city become filled with children and adults suffering from wounds and burns inflicted by fireworks. But you don’t have to suffer from these injuries. Keep yourself safe by staying away from fireworks. If you see someone who is not a professional playing with fireworks, take that as your cue to leave. If everyone stayed away from fireworks, there wouldn't be any fireworks related injuries. You can't control everyone, but you can control yourself. If you remember that accidents happen, you can keep them from happening to you. Stay away from amateur firework displays this Fourth of July.

Passage #54 - Why Fireworks?
Fireworks are used all over the world for a variety of different reasons. They are launched in India to celebrate Diwali, the festival of lights. They are set off on November 5th in Great Britain to commemorate Guy Fawkes Night. In the United States of America, fireworks are launched on the 4th of July to celebrate America’s independence. Fireworks are even set off in North Korea. This usually happens on April 8th to celebrate Buddha's birthday. No matter where you are in the world, there’s a good reason to set off fireworks.

Passage #55 - Classes of Fireworks
For the purposes of shipping and transportation, there are two different classes of explosives: the old classes and the new classes. Employees must be familiar with both. Under the old classes, there were three groups of explosives: A, B, and C. The old classes were American and were helpful in restricting the shipping of fireworks within the country, but they did not work well when people tried to import or export explosives to and from different countries. Under the new classes, fireworks are broken into groups with names such as: 1.1G, 1.2G, and 1.4S. This new system not only restricts fireworks shipments within the nation, like the old classes, but it also restricts international shipments. The new system was created by the United Nations, so many nations use it; unlike the old system, which was only used by America. The question of which system is the best remains one of the most explosive issues of our day.

Passage #56 - Fireworks in School
Under no circumstances will firecrackers be allowed in school. They are not educational and they are dangerous. Any student caught with firecrackers will receive a ten-day suspension. If you see any student possessing firecrackers, report them to the principal immediately or you will receive a suspension as well. Exercise good judgment or face the consequences. You have been warned. Now let’s have a great school year.
Passage #57 - No Independence Day?
We have celebrated Independence Day with a fireworks show on the first Saturday of July ever since our town was incorporated in 1963. This celebration has brought together the old and the young alike in a mutual display of patriotism and national pride. We regret to inform you that due to problems with the budget, there will be no fireworks show this year… unless we can raise the $20,000 to pay for the show. You can help by donating your old knickknacks. We are having a charity garage sale this Saturday and all proceeds will go toward the fireworks show. If you do not have any knickknacks, we will also accept money, printer cartridges, and old cell phones. Together, we can keep these hard times from becoming bad times.

Passage #58 - Smoke Bombs
Sparklers and smoke bombs are my favorite kinds of fireworks. They are both safe and fun but they are also quite different. After you light a smoke bomb, you should put it on the ground and run. Stand back and watch it go! When you light a sparkler, however, you continue to hold it until it is done sparkling. You're your hand around and have an awesome time! They also burn differently. Sparklers create bright lights and sparks when you light them, but smoke bombs create smoke in different colors. Remember kids: smoke bombs and sparklers are both extremely dangerous and should only be used by professionals.

Passage #59 - Getting a Good Spot
Getting a good spot at the fireworks show is not easy, but you can get one if you put your mind to it and follow these simple steps. First and most importantly, show up early. I’m talking hours early. The earlier you show up, the greater chance that you will find a good spot. If you show up merely an hour or two before the show begins, you will find that the best spots are already occupied. But if you show up like five or six hours early, you’ll get a dynamite spot. Once you have found your spot, spread out a blanket. If you do not have a blanket, your space will rapidly disappear as people start showing up. If you do have a blanket, you will mark your territory and most people will be respectful of your blanket. Lastly, sit in lawn chairs. Many people will walk by you during the show. Since it will be dark and since most of people will be looking up, you might get stepped on if you are low to the ground. By sitting in a lawn chair, you’ll raise yourself off of the ground and protect yourself from getting trampled. Follow these simple steps and you’ll have prime real estate at the hottest show in town.

Passage #60 - Bugs
Not all bugs slither and crawl. A bug can also be an error in a computer program. When a computer tries to read a program with a bug in it, the bug will affect the computer in one of two ways: the computer may process the error and continue running the program. In this case the bug only has a small effect on the computer; however, if the computer cannot process the error, then the bug will cause the computer to freeze and crash. This will require the user to restart the program or the computer. Bugs are pesky to computer programmers and users.
Passage #61 - Inputting and Outputting
Computers are very complex machines, but everything that they do can be put into two basic categories: inputting and outputting. Inputting is when the computer accepts information entered by the user. Outputting is when the computer returns information to the user. When you press a key on your keyboard, you input information. When the letter that you pressed appears on your monitor, your computer is outputting. Both inputting and outputting require the computer to process information, but input is controlled by the user and output is controlled by the computer. Without inputting and outputting, there would be no computing.

Passage #62 - Don't Click!
Have you ever received an email from a strange address with nothing but a mysterious link in the body? Don’t click that link! It may be a drive-by download attack, a common way of infecting computers. These attacks may start as link in an email or Facebook inbox. If you click the link, your computer browser will connect to a website created to attack computers. Once you have connected with the attack site, it will begin scanning your computer for weaknesses. If it finds a weakness, your computer will begin downloading a harmful file. You will not know that you are downloading this file. It will happen without your knowledge or permission. After the download is complete, the file will run and the attacker will have control of your computer. As you continue browsing the internet, you may not even realize that you have been victimized. The drive-by download attack is one of the most common threats to computer users today.

Passage #63 - Safe Browsing
Computer viruses are scary. If an attacker gets control of your computer, they can snoop through your files, steal your sensitive information, and even use your computer’s webcam and microphone to spy on you. But just because there are scary things on the Internet, doesn’t mean that we should stay off of the Internet. Instead, practice safe habits such as installing virus protection. Virus protection will not protect you against all attacks, but it may stop the most common ones. It also helps to keep your software up to date. Software updates close security holes. By installing updates from software providers, you will have a stronger system. Perhaps the most important thing that you can do is to be smart about how you browse. Don’t click on suspicious links and don’t open attached files unless you are expecting them. The Internet can be a dangerous place, but you’ll be safer if you take a few precautions. Happy browsing!

Passage #64 - Virus
Viruses can mess up computers and make them run slowly. If you’ve ever gotten a virus on your computer, you may have wondered why someone would go through all of that trouble just to ruin your computer. There are two reasons why people spread viruses: money and power. If someone infects your computer with a virus, they can make money by stealing your sensitive information and selling it to identity thieves. Or, they can gain power by using your computer to attack other computers and websites to take them offline. Your computer makes an attractive target to cyber-criminals because they can use it to gain money and power.
Passage #65 - Mobile Data
I've noticed that a lot of people are confused about mobile data and Wifi. Some people think that they're the same thing. Sure, both mobile data and Wifi allow you to connect to the internet, but there are some important differences between them. Mobile data is provided by the mobile phone company while Wifi is comes through cable or phone lines. Mobile data gives you internet access anywhere that your phone can get a signal, but you can only get Wifi access when you are near a router. Wifi is usually faster than mobile data too, but perhaps the most important difference is the amount that you can use. Customers are usually given an nearly unlimited amount of Wifi data, like an all-you-can-eat buffet. On the other hand, mobile data is often sold in limited portions, like an expensive restaurant. It is important to know which you are using so that you aren’t charged hefty fees for going over your mobile data plan limits.

Passage #66 - Buying a Computer
Buying a computer can be a frightening and overwhelming task, but don't let that prevent you from getting the right one. The first thing that you have to do is figure out which one you want. Start by researching on the internet: read reviews and compare features. Decide what's important to you and how much you are willing to pay. Once you have found the right computer, it is time to compare prices. Search by the model number of the computer. Check prices from at least three websites before you make your purchase, and don't forget to factor in the cost of shipping and handling. Also Google the name of the website on which you are planning to buy the computer and read reviews to make sure that they are reputable before placing your order. If it looks good, enter your information, await your shipment, and enjoy your new computer!

Passage #67 - Tablets
More and more people these days are buying tablets instead of personal computers. Each has advantages over the other. If you have to write a paper, build a website, or do a lot of computer work, you will probably want to use a personal computer since it will have a full size keyboard. Tablets also have keyboards, but they are not as comfortable to use for long periods of time since they are smaller. If you are just doing some casual internet browsing, social networking, or messaging, you may just want to use a tablet. Tablets are smaller and more portable than personal computers. That means that you can use your tablet while you are lying on the couch, on vacation, or in a car. Personal computers need to be plugged in to work while tablets have batteries that allow them to run for a long time without connecting to an outlet. There is a right time to use each of these devices. I want both.

Passage #68 - Computer Health
Working on a computer may be easier and safer than working in a mine, but it doesn’t come without risks. Using a computer for a long time can lead to poor eyesight, muscle loosening, back pain, and injuries to the hands and wrists. If you find yourself working or playing on a computer quite regularly, take a few steps to prevent these problems and you'll thank yourself later. When you are computing for a long time, take frequent breaks. Get up and walk around every once and while. Exercise a little bit. Take your eyes off of the computer screen. Stretch your hands and wrists. Straighten your back. It can be hard to pull yourself away from your computer once you get into a zone, but your body will thank you later if you do. Make your health a priority and don't worry so much about what's happening on that little screen.
Passage #69 - Taking Care of Your Shoes
When you spend your hard earned savings on a pair of shoes, you want to get the most for your money. One way to do this is to clean your shoes. When you get done, they’ll almost look brand new. First, get out a toothbrush and some cleaning spray. Spray the shoes over a sink with no dishes in it and gently scrub the shoes with a toothbrush. Wash the dirt off of the toothbrush repeatedly while you are scrubbing. When you finish scrubbing the foot covering, it is time to clean the soles. Get out some steel wool or an SOS pad, wet it, and then scrub the soles of your shoes clean. You may need to use a paperclip to free any pebbles stuck in the treading. Lastly, scrub the shoes off with a paper towel or clean rag. If you did a good job, your shoes should look almost as nice as when you first got them.

Passage #70 - Special Shoes
When playing some sports, athletes are required to wear special shoes. Two such sports are golf and bowling. Golf shoes have sharp metal spikes called cleats. These cleats help golfers keep their footing while swinging the club. On the other end of the spectrum are bowling shoes, which are very smooth and have almost no traction at all. Bowling shoes help bowlers slide down the lane while throwing the ball. While both of these types of shoes help athletes perform, I wouldn't wear either of them outside of games. Aside from looking ridiculous, golf shoes and bowling shoes do not have soles that are fit for street use.

Passage #71 - Dress Shoes
If you're planning on dressing up for a wedding, dance, or other formal event, you'll need to wear some dress shoes. While your feet may look great in dress shoes, they will probably feel horrible. Wearing dress shoes for more than a few minutes can be extremely painful. This pain may prevent you from having a good time. One thing that you can do to protect yourself is to bring a box of band-aids with you. As the dress shoes tear up the skin on your feet, put those band-aids on the wounds to ease the pain and prevent further damage. The band-aids will create a protective layer that will reduce the amount of pain that your dress shoes may inflict. Don't let foot pain ruin your fun; come to the party prepared.

Passage #72 - Why Wear Shoes?
Look down at your feet. Are you wearing shoes? Why? People wear shoes many reasons. The first and most important reason is to protect their feet. Shoes keep people from hurting their feet while walking on rough surfaces, but this isn’t the only reason why people wear shoes. Some people wear special shoes that are designed to help them play a game, like bowling shoes or soccer cleats. Some people wear expensive designer shoes so that they appear fashionable and feel good about themselves. And a lot of other people like my dad wear shoes so that their feet won’t stink up the room.
Passage #73 - House Training Your Dog
Having a dog in your home can serve many purposes, but living with a poorly trained dog is not worth the mess. These mangy mutts will go potty inside of your home. This can stain your floors and make your house smell bad. In order to prevent this you have to teach your dog to go potty outside. This may require you to go on a lot more walks with your dog. You may have to sit outside for long periods of time while you are waiting for your dog to use it. But it will be worth it to not have a bunch of dog mess all over your house. So if you love your dog but hate cleaning dog-doo off of the rug, teach your dog the right way to go.

Passage #74 - Fetch
If you want to form a strong relationship with your dog, try playing fetch. It's fun and easy to do, and if everything goes well your dog should do most of the fetching. Just find something that your dog wants to retrieve, such as a stick, a thick rope tied in knots, or a squeaky toy. Show it to your dog to get his or her interest. Shake it around in your hand and call out the dog’s name. Once they are paying attention, throw the object as far as you can. Be careful not to throw it anywhere that you wouldn’t want your dog to go, like the middle of the road or under a china cabinet. Hopefully your dog will bring the object back to you. When he or she does, praise your dog and command him or her to drop the object. Pick it up and repeat the process for the next 10 to 15 years.

Passage #75 - African Wild Dog
The lion is often thought of as the king of the jungle, but the African wild dog may be a better hunter. Both lions and African wild dogs are pack animals and have females lead their hunts, but they have different hunting styles. Although lions are very fast, they do not have much stamina. They attack in short, ferocious bursts because they get tired quickly. On the other hand, African wild dogs are not very fast, but they have incredible stamina. They can run for hours and often chase their prey to exhaustion. Dr. George Schaller studied African wild dogs in the Serengeti and found that 9 out of 10 of their hunts ended in kills, while lions are only successful in 3 out of 10 hunts. So you see, it’s not always good to be king.

Passage #76 - Man’s Best Friend
There’s a reason why dogs are called “man’s best friend.” The good friendship that we have with dogs is thousands of years old and, as with most good friendships, was formed by mutual benefit. Dogs are of great value to people because they use their keen senses to detect threats and alert their owners by barking. You may find your dog’s yapping to be quite annoying, but under some circumstances it can be quite helpful. But people are of great value to dogs too. Dogs who live with people usually have easier access to food and a safer place to stay than they would on their own, and that truly is what friends are for.
Answer Key

1. Compare/Contrast
2. Problem/Solution
3. Cause/Effect
4. Sequence
5. Compare/Contrast
6. Sequence
7. Cause/Effect
8. Problem/Solution
9. Cause/Effect
10. Problem/Solution
11. Sequence
12. Compare/Contrast
13. Cause/Effect
14. Description
15. Problem/Solution
16. Compare/Contrast
17. Sequence
18. Cause/Effect
19. Compare/Contrast
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21. Problem/Solution
22. Cause/Effect
23. Description
24. Problem/Solution
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26. Compare/Contrast
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31. Cause/Effect
32. Cause/Effect
33. Sequence
34. Problem/Solution
35. Compare/Contrast
36. Compare/Contrast
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40. Compare/Contrast
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42. Problem/Solution
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76. Cause/Effect