

Informational Text Task Card #1

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania is one of the original thirteen founding states in America. Its name means, "Penn's woods," because it was named by William Penn. Pennsylvania officially became a state on December 12, 1787.

Pennsylvania experiences all seasons—winter, spring, summer, and fall. Its state bird is the Ruffed Grouse and its motto is "Virtue, liberty, and independence." Its state capital is Harrisburg and its largest city is Philadelphia.

Pennsylvania is in the northeast United States. It borders New Jersey, New York, Delaware, Ohio, West Virginia, and Maryland. The Appalachian mountains run right through the center of the state! It is the thirty-third largest state in America.

Some famous Americans that were born in Pennsylvania are Louisa May Alcott, Bill Cosby, Reggie Jackson, and Daniel Boone.

Show What You Know

1. Where is Pennsylvania located? Which paragraph helps you determine its location?
2. What can you infer about Pennsylvania's weather?
3. What can you infer about Pennsylvania's size?
4. Explain how this paragraph may be different if written from the point of view of a 5th grader living in Pennsylvania.

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Informational Text Task Card #2

Life as a Pioneer Child

Today, many children return home from school to play video games, do homework, or run outside and play. This hasn't always been the case, though!

Pioneer children, living in the early 1800s, were expected to work hard and play the role of a miniature adult as their families built a new life on the frontier. Only about half of all pioneer children attended school, and most pioneer kids learned to read by drawing letters in the sand with sticks and by reading the only books they had— their bibles.

After a day of learning, girls were expected to help their mothers cook, clean, sew, and tend to the younger children. Boys helped construct new buildings, worked in the farms and fields, and hunted for food to feed their family.

In their **minimal** free time, pioneer children made up games like hide and seek or tug of war and even made their own toys! Life is certainly different for children in the 21st century.

Show What You Know

1. How does life today differ from the life of a pioneer child?
2. What can you infer about life as a pioneer child? Use evidence to support your inference.
3. Use context clues to infer the meaning of the word "minimal."
4. Why do you think pioneer children were expected to be "miniature adults"? Use evidence from the paragraph to support your answer.

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Informational Text Task Card #3

Tennis

Tennis is a sport that is played all over the world. It can be played by a single person or it can be played as a team, which is referred to as "doubles."

Players need a tennis ball and racket in order to play the game. The sport is played on a tennis court, which is in the shape of a rectangle with a net stretched low across the middle.

The game has several rules. One player serves a tennis ball over a net. The other player has to hit the ball back toward their opponent without touching the net. The tennis ball can bounce only once on each side of the court. This game continues until one player does not hit the ball over the net, they hit the ball out of bounds, or they do not hit the ball at all. Then, their opponent scores a point.

A player wins when they have earned four points in total and have two more points than their opponent. Men and women all over the world play tennis for fun, for sport, or even as their jobs.

Show What You Know

1. What is the main idea of paragraph two? List one detail that supports the main idea.
2. Write a one sentence summary of this text.
3. How does a player win a tennis match?
4. What can you infer about someone who plays tennis as a professional job?

Informational Text Task Card #4

What are Mammals?

Mammals are living creatures that all have several characteristics in common. First, all mammals have hair. Some have thick hair, while others have thin and wispy hair. Mammals also give birth to live young; their babies do not hatch from eggs. Mammal mothers also nurse their young by giving them milk from their body to drink. All mammals also have four limbs. Some walk on all fours, but others can walk upright. Mammals also use lungs to breath and have vertebrae that make up a backbone. Some mammals, like whales and dolphins live in the water, but need to come to the surface for air. Mammals can be found all over the world, on every continent. People are mammals, too!

Show What You Know

1. Give an example of a mammal that walks on all fours. Use evidence from the text to justify your answer.
2. What is the author's purpose for writing this paragraph?
3. What are some differences you might find among different types of mammals?
4. Find evidence that the author uses to support the first sentence of the paragraph.

Informational Text Task Card #5

Olympic History

The Olympics are a series of events that are held every four years. The earliest report of the games dates back to 776 B.C. and took place in ancient Greece.

Long ago, the games only included summer sports. However, in the early 1920s the Olympic Committee started the winter games. Events like bobsledding, ice skating, ice hockey, and skiing were added to the festivities.

At first, only men were allowed to participate in the Olympics, but women joined the games during the 1900 Olympics. While the early Olympics were always held in Greece; today they are held in major cities around the world like Los Angeles, Sydney, Montreal, Rome, and London.

Show What You Know

1. Why might the Olympic Committee decide to add winter games to the Olympics?
2. Identify two differences about the Olympics from when they began until current day.
3. What do the four winter sports listed have in common?
4. How often are the Olympics held?

Informational Text Task Card #6

A Hawaiian History

If you travel to the island of Hawaii, you may be able to observe a special celebration called the Mokihana Festival. This event takes place on the island of Kauai and teaches others about common Hawaiian traditions.

The festival got its name from the Mokihana flower that only grows in the forests of Hawaii. It began as a men's hula competition! Hula dancing is a way that Hawaiians tell stories about their lives.

Now, the week-long festival includes lectures, food, crafts, arts, and the hula. Women and girls wear flower leis and men and boys wear seed leis around their necks during the festival. The leis are an ancient tradition of Hawaiian culture, originally used to symbolize peace and to beautify Hawaiians.

Show What You Know

1. Why is the Mokihana flower so special to Hawaii?
2. What traditions might you find at the Mokihana Festival?
3. Explain the purpose of the Mokihana festival and use evidence to support your answer.
4. Describe the text structure in which this text is written. How does the author give the information?

Informational Text Task Card #7

Types of Leaves

All plants have leaves. However, some leaves look alike while others look very different. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes and can be flat, smooth, or even pointy.

Deciduous, which means “tending to fall off;” plants have flat leaves that can be large or small, and rounded or jagged. These leaves change color during autumn months and fall off. They grow again every spring.

Coniferous plants, on the other hand, are known as evergreen plants. They have needles which stay green all year round. These needles may fall off from time to time, but the plants do not lose them all at once.

Even though they may look different, all leaves use light and air to make food.

Show What You Know

1. What do all leaves have in common?
2. Explain the importance of the term “**deciduous**” when used to describe that particular type of leaf.
3. What can you infer about coniferous plants?
4. Rewrite the title of the text to show the main idea of the information given.

Informational Text Task Card #8

How to Make a Fossil

Fossils, or imprints, can tell us a lot about plants and animals of the past. Paleontologists study fossils to learn more about our history.

Since original fossils can be hard to come by, you can construct your own fossil if you have the right materials. First, you need to gather a seashell, white glue, petroleum jelly, and a chunk of clay. Next, rub a small amount of petroleum jelly over top of the sea shell. Press the shell into the clay. Then, remove the shell and fill its imprint with a thin layer of white glue. Let the glue harden overnight. Once it is dry, pull the hard glue away from the clay. You have just made a model fossil!

Show What You Know

1. If you created your own fossil, how would it be different from an original fossil found by an archaeologist?
2. What signal words does the author use to tell you that this is written sequentially?
3. When the glue hardens, what is the next step you should take when making a fossil?
4. What causes an imprint in a homemade fossil?

Informational Text Task Card #9

Erosion and Weathering

Earth's surface is made from rock. Over time, the rock gets broken down and moves. Erosion and weathering play a large part in shaping the earth. These processes are similar, yet different.

Erosion is the movement of weathered rock, while weathering is the process of breaking rocks into smaller pieces. Both water and wind can cause weathering and erosion to occur. Each process happens very slowly, and it can take thousands of years for rocks to become broken down and changed. In fact, the Grand Canyon was formed because both weathering and erosion gradually occurred to the land around it.

Show What You Know

1. How does the author support the statement that erosion and weathering are similar, yet different?
2. What similarities do weathering and erosion share?
3. What can you infer about the Grand Canyon? Use evidence to support your answer.
4. Write an appropriate subtitle to accompany this article.

Informational Text Task Card #10

Water, Water Everywhere

Water is all around us on Earth. Water can take one of three states: a liquid, a solid, or a gas. The state that the water takes on depends upon its temperature.

When water is at room temperature, it remains a liquid. Water turns into ice when it freezes at 32 degrees Fahrenheit or colder. It turns into a gas when its temperature boils to 212 degrees Fahrenheit. In its gas form it is called water vapor.

Because water is constantly changing forms, it goes through a never-ending water cycle. First, evaporation occurs when water **gains** thermal energy from the sun and turns into vapor or steam and rises into the air. Then, condensation forms when water vapor **loses** thermal energy, the energy that comes from heat, and changes back into a liquid. Finally, when there is so much condensation that the air can't hold it anymore, precipitation occurs!

Water is very important to Planet Earth!

Show What You Know

1. Give an example of a situation where you might find each of the three states of water.
2. According to the passage, what causes water to turn to gas?
3. Use context clues to infer the meaning of the word "thermal."
4. What can you infer about the water droplets that form on a glass of ice water?

Informational Text Task Card #11

Jamestown

Jamestown was the first permanent settlement in America. Nearly 104 people from England were dropped off and left to settle this area of land in Virginia in May of 1607. Initially, the settlers faced many hardships. After one of the leaders of the colony, Captain Christopher Newport, left for England to gather more supplies, a group of Native Americans stepped up to help the suffering settlers. Powhatan, the chief of the natives, agreed to help the struggling colonists by showing them how to plant crops and build a village. Eventually the Powhatan's relationship with the Americans became sour when the new Americans demanded too much food from the tribe.

While living in Jamestown, many settlers lost their lives because there was not enough food and contagious diseases were rampant. Only 38 of the original 105 settlers were still alive by early 1610.

The colony was later saved when new settlers arrived with more supplies. Eventually, settlers began growing tobacco plants to sell. Despite its rocky beginning, Jamestown is now a national American historic site.

Show What You Know

1. What inferences can you make about the new settlers who arrived in Jamestown?
2. Why is Jamestown now a national historic site?
3. How did so many of the original settlers die?
4. What do you think the author means by the term "sour relationship"? Explain.

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Informational Text Task Card #12

Helen Keller's Legacy

Helen Keller is a famous historic figure who lost her vision and ability to hear before she turned two years old.

She was born in 1880 and soon became very ill. After she recovered from her illness, she was unable to see or express how she was feeling to anyone around her.

In 1887, Helen began to learn to communicate. Her teacher, Anne Sullivan, began spelling words onto the palm of her hand. Eventually, Helen learned to speak and later traveled the world in order to help others that were blind and deaf express themselves. She later worked with the American Foundation for the Blind and became a writer before passing away in 1968.

Show What You Know

1. What caused Helen Keller to lose her sight and hearing?
2. According to the text, what was the solution to Helen's inability to communicate?
3. What is the main idea of this passage? Provide one detail from the text to support the main idea.
4. Why was it important that Helen learn to communicate with those around her?

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Informational Text Task Card #13

All-American Girls Baseball

When the United States entered into World War II, most men decided to fight in the war. Because of the war, male baseball players were hard to find, which allowed a new kind of baseball league to form.

The All American Girls Professional Baseball League originated in 1943. It allowed women to play professional baseball until the men returned from war. The league had teams in several different cities and attracted a large audience. Even though the league ended in 1954, it popularized the sport of softball for women, which is even played in the Olympics today. The forming of the first girls baseball league even inspired a Hollywood hit movie called *A League of Their Own*.

Show What You Know

1. Why was the Girls Baseball League formed?
2. What can you infer about the audience at the baseball games?
3. Provide evidence from the text that proves the lasting impact that the league left.
4. Describe at least 3 important events the movie *A League of Their Own* might include.

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Informational Text Task Card #14

Edible Plants

Did you know that all plant parts are edible, depending upon the plant you are eating? A plant has five main parts—a root, a stem, leaves, a flower, and seeds.

Some kinds of vegetables that you eat are considered to be roots, plant parts that grow underneath the ground. Carrots, beets, parsnips, and onions are examples of roots.

Some other kinds of vegetables are considered to be stems, like celery. You can even eat the flower of a plant. Cauliflower and broccoli are flowers.

Every time that you eat salad, you are actually eating leaves! Finally, peanuts, corn, and peas are considered to be a plant's seeds.

The next time you eat a plant, try to name the part that you are eating!

Show What You Know

1. How can you tell if you are eating a root of a plant?
2. What types of vegetables are leaves on a plant?
3. Use context clues to infer the meaning of the word "edible." Provide evidence from the text to support your inference.
4. What proof does the author provide that all plant parts are edible, in some instances?

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Informational Text Task Card #15

Where'd You Go, Pluto?

Pluto used to be considered the ninth planet in our solar system. In 2006, scientists decided to remove its title of planet and instead classify it as a dwarf planet.

According to astronomers, Pluto is billions of miles away from the sun, which is much farther away than the other 8 orbiting planets. Pluto still makes its way around the sun; it just makes an oval shaped orbit as opposed to a circular shape. This means it is sometimes closer to the sun than other times.

Pluto is smaller than Earth's moon and is only half the size of the United States. Today, NASA is still using satellites to explore this small, icy dwarf planet.

Show What You Know

1. List one reason scientists gave for classifying Pluto as a dwarf planet.
2. What can you infer about the weather on Pluto?
3. Find evidence to support the fact that states "Pluto is small."
4. In what shape do all of the other planets orbit around the sun? Provide evidence to support your answer.

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Informational Text Task Card #16

Can You Hear Me Now?

Telephones have changed a great deal since their invention by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876. The first pay telephone, which was operated by inserting coins, was put in place in 1888, and the first coast-to coast call was made from New York City to San Francisco in 1915. Telephones did not become commonplace in homes until the early 1900s, when landlines had to connect every phone line.

Throughout the 1900s, many improvements were made to the telephone, and the dial phone was replaced with a touch-tone phone (with buttons for dialing) in 1960. The first cell phones were sold in 1984, and the rest is history!

Cell phones are now commonplace and the use of landline telephones is declining. Only time will tell what is next as telephones continue to evolve.

Show What You Know

1. What is the author's purpose for writing this text? Be specific!
2. Why do you think it was such a big event when the first coast-to-coast call was made?
3. Use context clues to infer the meaning of the word "evolve."
4. Who is the inventor credited with creating the telephone?

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