

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**READ THE PASSAGE** Stop after each paragraph and ask yourself what it was about.

When Ramona Quimby first appeared in 1955, she was four years old. She turned nine in 1989. Ramona is the main character in a series of books written by Beverly Cleary. For many years, kids have laughed at Ramona's adventures. After all, Ramona once wore her soft blue pajamas under her school clothes. And she tried to dye herself blue.

Beverly Cleary grew up in Portland, Oregon. Her family lived near Klickitat Street. It became the name of the street where Ramona lives.

Kids all over the world know about Ramona Quimby. The books can be read in 14 languages. Videos and television programs have been made from the stories. Statues of Ramona, her friend Henry Huggins, and his dog Ribsby are in a park close to Klickitat Street. Kids can splash in the fountains of water under the feet of the statues. If Ramona were real, she'd join right in!

**SKILL PRACTICE** Read the item. Write your response.

1. Is Ramona a real person? How do you know?

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2. Write one detail from the text about Ramona.

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3. What would be a good title for this text?

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**STRATEGY PRACTICE** What advice would you give someone who could not stay focused while reading the passage?

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**READ THE PASSAGE** Notice the main idea and important facts about it.

### Prickly Desert Plants

Plants need the right amounts of sun and water to survive. Desert plants get plenty of sun but not much water. Rain might not fall for months. And when rain does fall, it evaporates quickly. Desert plants must use water carefully in order to live in the hot, dry desert.

Many types of cactuses live in the desert. Most have prickly spines that are a type of leaf. Some spines are short and cover the plant. They shade the cactus from the hot sun. Some cactuses have long spines. These catch rain and direct it down the stem to the roots.

Cactus roots are not deep, but they stretch far away from the plant. Cactus roots grow when it rains. Then the plant can absorb more water. A cactus stores the rain inside the stem, where it cannot evaporate. Its thick skin expands to hold the water.

A cactus stores water and uses it slowly. People can learn about careful water use from a cactus!

**SKILL PRACTICE** Read the item. Write your response.

1. What is the second paragraph about?

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2. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?

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3. How does the last paragraph relate to the first paragraph?

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**STRATEGY PRACTICE** In your own words, tell a partner four important details that you read in the passage.

**READ THE PASSAGE** Notice the steps Jake takes to get ready to bat.

### Jake Is Up to Bat

“Let’s go, Tigers!” The fans clap their hands as they cheer. Jake sits in the team’s dugout. He has been playing baseball since he was five. Now that he’s nine, he’s a good player. He stays focused and calm even when the score is close. He watches the game carefully from the dugout.

When it’s Jake’s turn to bat, he has a method for getting ready. He first grabs his favorite bat. He swings it twice to loosen up. Then, he steps confidently into the batter’s box. Jake puts down the bat and leans it against his legs. Then, he hikes up his pants and tugs on both of his batter’s gloves.

With his uniform just right, Jake takes hold of the bat. He taps the tip into the dirt three times. Next, he stares at the pitcher and takes two more practice swings. All the while, he’s thinking about hitting the ball. He doesn’t even hear the crowd yell to get a hit. Jake plants his feet firmly in place. He nods his head. He’s now ready for the first pitch.

**SKILL PRACTICE** Read the item. Write your response.

1. What are the first two actions that Jake takes when it’s his turn at bat?

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2. What does Jake do right after he stares at the pitcher?

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3. How long has Jake been playing baseball? How do you know?

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**STRATEGY PRACTICE** With a partner, act out the steps Jake takes to get ready to bat. Make sure you do the steps in the same order as Jake.



**READ THE PASSAGE** Remember the steps for making pizza dough.

### Twirling Dough

My family and I go to Uncle Gino's house for dinner on the last Saturday of every month. That's when he makes pizza twirl.

Before we arrive, Uncle Gino shapes the pizza dough into a ball. After we get there, my job is to spread flour on his work space. Then I sit on a kitchen stool and watch the pizza expert at work. Uncle Gino removes his watch and ring. Next, he dusts the ball of dough with flour. Then he uses his fingers to press down on the dough. He presses over and over as he shapes the dough into a flat circle. Uncle Gino says that a ten-inch (25-cm) circle is best for tossing.

My favorite part comes next. Uncle Gino closes his hands into fists. He carefully drapes the circle of dough over his hands. I say, "Get ready, get set, toss!" Uncle Gino flings the dough into the air with a spin. It twirls around before he catches it on the backs of his fists. Then he tosses it again. The dough stretches bigger each time he catches it.

**SKILL PRACTICE** Read the item. Write your response.

1. When does Uncle Gino remove his watch and ring? Why does he do it?

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2. What is the narrator's favorite part?

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3. What does the narrator do to help Uncle Gino?

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**STRATEGY PRACTICE** Look back at the passage. Circle the important steps that Uncle Gino follows for tossing pizza dough.

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**READ THE PASSAGE** Think of questions you have about the information.

### **From the Mouth to the Body**

Some parts of your body work together like a team to do important jobs. These teams are called systems. Your digestive system is made up of your body parts that work together to break down your food.

The job of breaking down food begins with your mouth. Your teeth break up the food you eat into a size you can swallow.

Swallowing sends the food down your throat. Your throat connects to a tube called the esophagus (ih-SOF-uh-gus). Muscles in the esophagus squeeze together and push the food down into your stomach. The stomach walls move in and out. This causes the food to mix and churn. It becomes like a thick soup. The soupy food is then squeezed into the small intestine.

The food is still too big for your body to use. So fluids enter the intestine and break down the food more. Then the food is small enough to enter your bloodstream. The blood delivers the food to the cells in your body.

**SKILL PRACTICE** Read the item. Write your response.

1. What is the main idea of this text?

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2. Where and how in the human body does food first begin to break down?

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3. Where are pieces of food small enough to enter the bloodstream? Explain how.

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**STRATEGY PRACTICE** In your own words, tell a partner the main idea of the passage.

