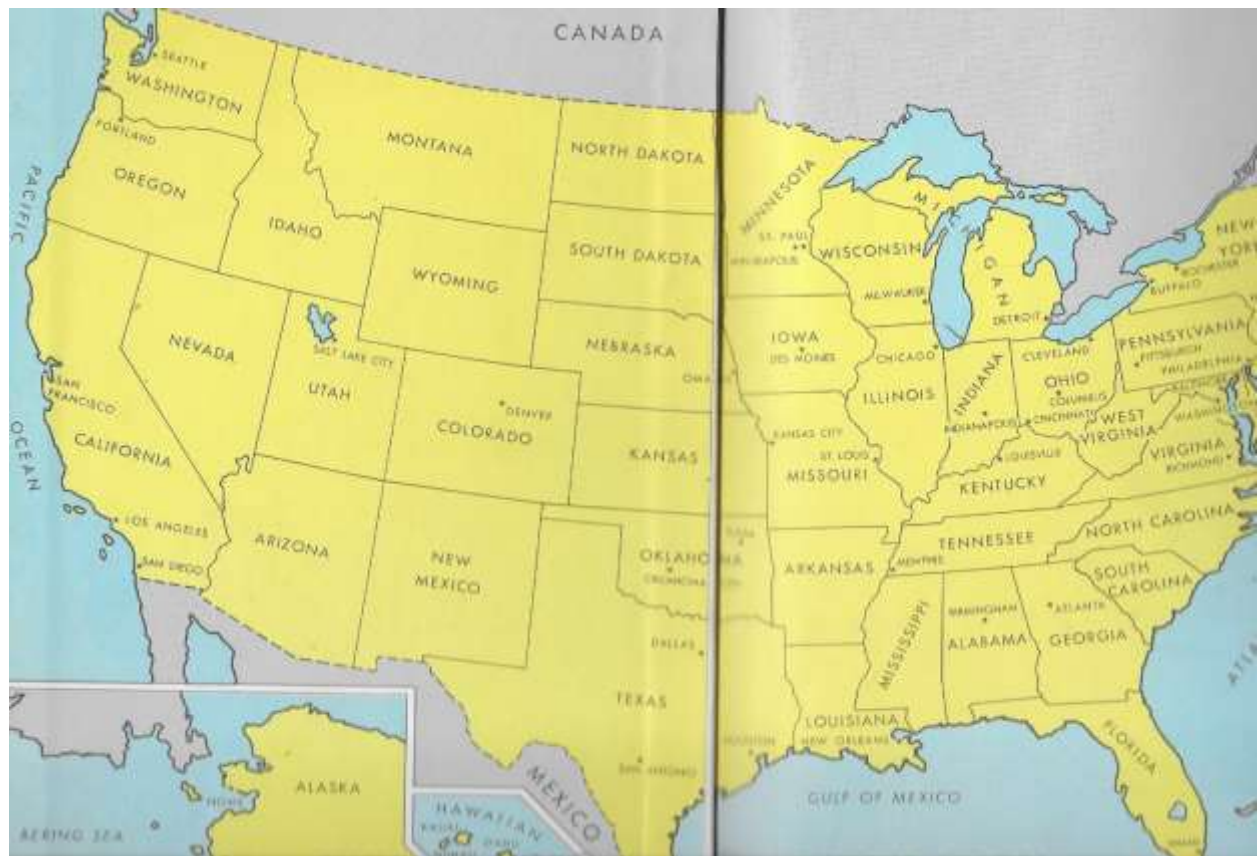


# Our Country

Open Court Basic Readers





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# PART ONE

*Our Country*

*Long Ago*

# Our Country

How does our country look to an astronaut high above the earth? What does he see of our country as he goes flying around the earth so high in the sky?

An astronaut sees the big things first. There is so much more water than land that he will see the great oceans around our country. He will see that our country is just a part of a big piece of land that we call North America. Way up north the astronaut will see Alaska and Canada. South of our country he will see Mexico.

Looking down at our country, an astronaut might then want to find the places that mean most to him. He would see rivers and the Great Lakes and the mountains in the East and West. He would look for the places that he knew when he was on earth. He would be thinking of his family and friends and his home. He would be so far, far above our country that our land would be spread out like a map below him. To him our country would look like the map on the opposite page.

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## WORDS TO WATCH

---

astronaut

North America

Alaska

earth

Canada

Mexico

Great Lakes

opposite

explorers

pioneers

heroes

country



Understanding maps of your own block, your street, your path to school, your city, and your state will help you understand the map of our country.

This book will tell you how our country grew to be the way it is. It will tell you about our early explorers, our brave pioneers, and our great heroes.

When you have read this book from cover to cover, you will understand better why our country is a great country, and you will be very glad that you live in it.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. Look on your map of the United States, and tell the names of the oceans which touch our country. What are the names of the countries which touch our country? What else can you learn from this map?
2. What are the names of the mountain ranges on your map? The lakes? The rivers?
3. Look at the maps of our country on the inside front and back cover of your book. What can you learn from them?
4. What states have you visited? What big cities? What important places?
5. What do you think can be done to make our country a better country?



## How America Was Discovered

One sunny day in Italy, a long time ago, a boy named Columbus was sitting on the seashore looking out over the water.

“I’m going to be a sailor when I grow up,” he said to himself. “I want to sail on unknown seas to find new lands.”

---

### WORDS TO WATCH

---

Italy  
Columbus  
unknown  
ocean  
India  
Isabella

Spain  
monsters  
sea serpents  
voyage  
Atlantic Ocean  
Santa Maria

Pinta  
Nina  
island  
nightingale  
generous  
America

Columbus loved the ocean, and when he grew up he did become a great sailor.

In Columbus' time people did not know much about the world—Many of them thought it was flat. But Columbus thought it was round. He said that he could sail around the world just as a fly can walk around an apple.

Columbus wanted most of all to go to India because India was a rich country. In those days people went to India by travelling east, but because Columbus thought the world was round, he wanted to reach India by sailing west.

Columbus was a poor man. He had no ships and no money. When he asked people to help him, they only laughed at him and thought he was out of his mind. But he kept on trying.

Finally he went to Isabella, the queen of Spain. The queen gave Columbus three ships and 120 sailors and wished him good luck.

The sailors did not want to go on the voyage because they were afraid that they would never see their homes again. They had heard stories about monsters and sea serpents attacking ships and killing the sailors.

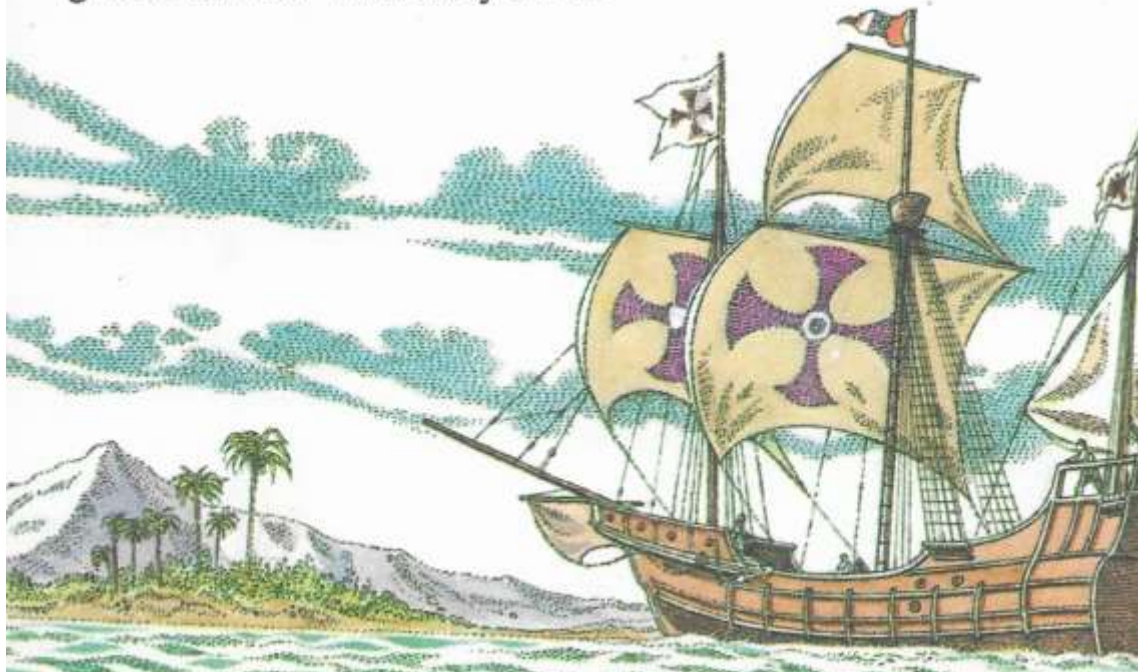
At last the ships were ready. Columbus and his sailors set out across the Atlantic Ocean in the *Santa Maria*, the *Pinta*, and the *Nina*. The ships sailed for many days, and the farther the ships went, the more frightened the sailors became.

At last they said to Columbus, "We have been on the ocean for more than thirty days, and still there is no sight of land. We are hungry and afraid. We will go no farther."

But Columbus answered, "Wait a few more days. If by that time we have not found land, we will turn around and go back." The very next day the sailors saw a bird, and then they knew that land must be near. The following morning, October 12, 1492, they heard the cry "Land ho!" There ahead of them lay a beautiful island. The sailors cheered and sang songs and the ships' cannons boomed. When the sailors reached shore, they kissed the ground because they were so glad to be on land again. They begged Columbus' pardon for wanting to give up the voyage and return home.

On his way home from his first trip across the Atlantic Ocean, Columbus wrote about the lands and the Indians he had seen.

"The lands are all most beautiful and full of trees so high they seem to reach to the sky. The nightingale was singing and other birds of a thousand sorts. The people of this island, and of all the others that I have found and seen, are kind and generous with what they have.



“When I first came to the Indies, they thought I had come from heaven. They ran from house to house and to the nearby villages with loud cries of ‘Come! Come to see the people from heaven!’ ”

Columbus thought that the island he had discovered was near India; he did not yet know that it was a new continent.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. Where did Columbus want to go with his ships?
2. Who gave him the ships and the sailors to make the voyage?
3. Why were the sailors afraid to go on the voyage?
4. Why were the sailors glad when they saw a bird?
5. What did Columbus write about his discovery?
6. Do you think Columbus was a brave man? Why?

# Pocahontas and Captain John Smith

When Columbus returned to Spain, he brought back all sorts of things from America that people had never seen before. He brought back pieces of cotton, strange looking wood carvings, and even stranger-looking birds and animals. He also brought back some Indians, and, to people in Europe, they seemed the strangest of all.

Columbus told many wonderful stories about the land he had discovered, and soon people from all over Europe wanted to see this new land for themselves. One of these men was Captain John Smith. In the year 1607 he and some other men and women came to America from England and built a little town called Jamestown.

The people who built Jamestown did not have much food and many became sick. Captain John Smith became their leader. He learned the Indian language and traded with the Indians to get food.

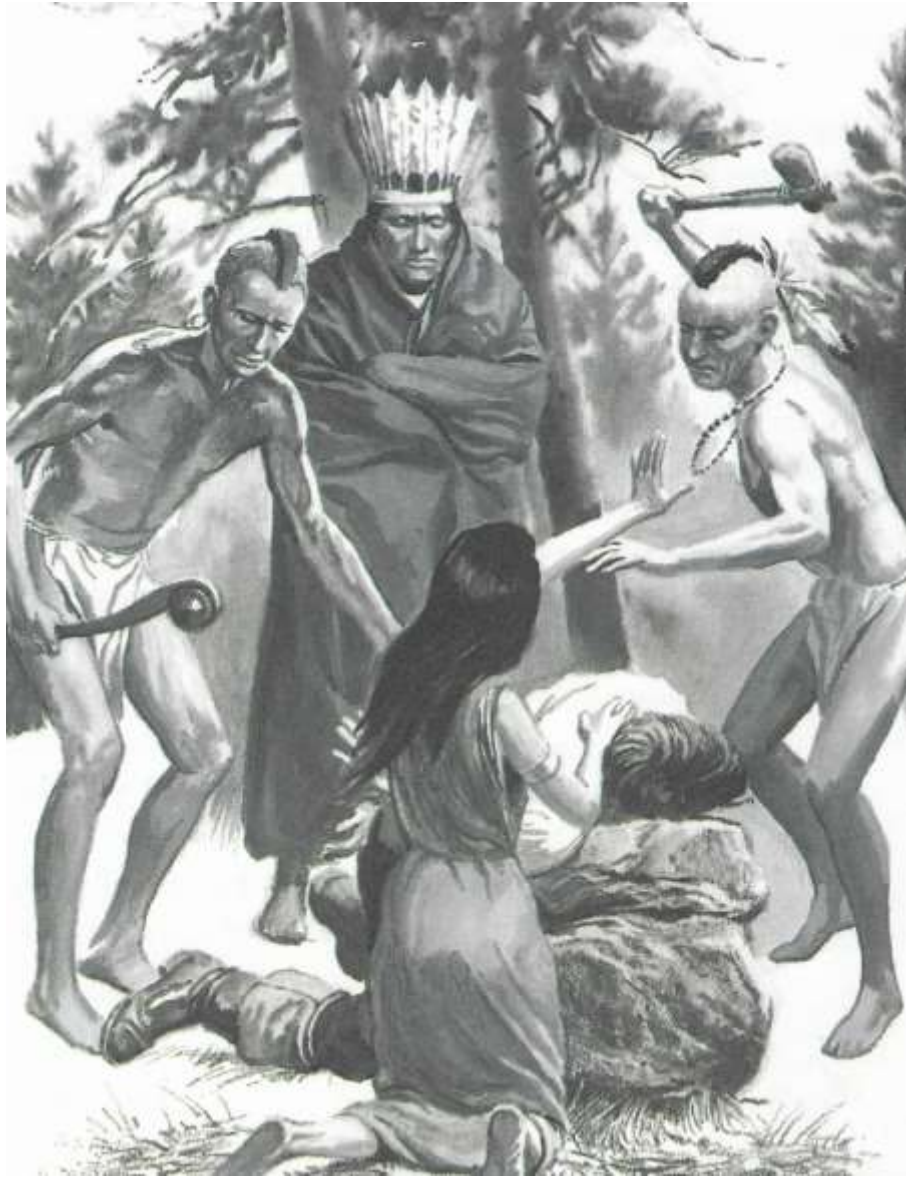
In one of his books, Captain Smith tells how he killed an Indian of a friendly tribe. The other Indians of that tribe took

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## WORDS TO WATCH

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Pocahontas	prisoner	hatchets
Captain John Smith	warriors	England
language	protect	Europe



him to their chief. The Indian chief ordered his braves to beat Captain John Smith to death with hatchets.

The Indian chief had a beautiful daughter named Pocahontas. When Pocahontas saw that Captain Smith was taken prisoner by Indian warriors, she felt sorry for him. She could see that he was a brave man.

When she saw that the Indians were going to kill him, she ran up to him. She asked the Indians not to beat him, and she held his head in her arms to protect him.

Finally the Indian chief ordered the Indians not to beat Captain John Smith. Pocahontas had saved his life. Later she became a Christian, married an Englishman, and went to England. She was given many honors.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. What did Columbus bring back to Spain?
2. Why was Captain John Smith a good leader?
3. Who was Pocahontas?
4. Why did Pocahontas want to save Captain John Smith?

# The Indians

The Indians found America long before Columbus did. They came to America so long ago that no one knows exactly where they came from. Many people think they came from Siberia, and walked across to Alaska on a piece of dry land. Others believe they sailed across the Pacific Ocean.

The Indians were the first Americans. Columbus called them Indians because he thought he had landed in India. We still call them Indians because Columbus did, even though America is very far from India.

The Indians have taught us many things. Did you know that potatoes and tomatoes and corn were first raised by Indians? They showed us how to grow pumpkins and squash and beans too.

They knew how to start a fire with flint stones. They also knew how to talk to their friends far away by sending different kinds of smoke puffs into the air.

There were Indians in almost every part of North and South America when Columbus landed. The next stories will tell you some interesting facts about the American Indians.

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## QUESTIONS

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1. Why are the Indians called Indians?
2. What vegetables did the Indians show us how to grow?
3. What else did the Indians know?



## Spelling Words to Watch

### I. Read and Spell:

half	nature	cousin
ache	buy	straight
guess	answer	minute
niece	once	station
cough	through	sure
built	fruit	friend
suit	their	busy
enough	chorus	piece
special	whistle	gnat
sugar	often	believe

### II. Read and Answer:

1. Why do you think each of these words is hard to spell?
2. Which of these words do you think is the hardest to spell?
3. Think of some other words that are hard to spell.

### III. Write

1. Write five sentences, each one using two of the words in the lists on this page.
2. Write three sentences, each one using three of the words in the lists on this page.



## The Indians of the East

The Indians who lived in the eastern part of the United States were hunters and farmers. They tracked animals silently in the thick forests, they fished in the swift streams, and they grew many crops.

An Indian hunter had to bring home fresh deer meat, or his family would be disappointed. He had to find deer tracks and follow them quietly until he could see the deer. He could not step on a dry twig, or the deer would hear him and dash away into the forest.

When he was close to the deer, he would draw an arrow from his quiver and place it in his bow. He would aim the arrow and—Z-I-N-G—he would shoot to kill!

---

### WORDS TO WATCH

---

streams

tobacco

wigwams

disappointed

kernels

canoes

The Indian men did the hunting, and the Indian women did the farming. They grew corn, tobacco, beans, and squash. They pounded the kernels of corn into meal and boiled it in water to make corn meal mush. Sometimes they put maple sugar in the corn meal to make it sweet.

Some Indians in the eastern part of the United States lived in wigwams. Wigwams were big enough for only one family. Others lived in longhouses, which looked like long barns made of logs and bark from trees. Several families lived together in one longhouse.

The roads of that time were the many lakes and rivers in the eastern part of the United States. The Indians travelled along these lakes and rivers in canoes. They made their canoes from the bark of elm trees or birch trees. The Indians could travel quickly over the water in these light canoes or carry them over land to the next river or lake.

The Indians of the East knew how to use all the good things that nature gave them.



1. How did the Indians of the East get their food?
2. What did the Indian women do?
3. How did the Indians of the East travel?
4. What did the Indians of the East live in?

## Backward Rhyme

*American Folk Rhyme*

One bright day in the middle of the night,  
Two dead boys got up to fight.  
Back to back they faced each other,  
Drew their swords and shot each other.  
A deaf policeman heard the noise,  
Came and shot the two dead boys.  
If you do not believe this lie is true,  
Ask the blind man; he saw it too.



## The Plains Indians

The Great Plains in the middle of the United States are miles of open rolling country without many trees. The Indians who lived there were called the Plains Indians.

Long ago thousands and thousands of buffalo roamed the Great Plains. The Plains Indians killed these buffalo for food, for clothing, for shelter, and for almost everything else they needed.

---

### WORDS TO WATCH

---

Great Plains	tepees	papoose
buffalo	Spanish	deerskin
roamed	tanned	buckskin
herds	moccasins	cradleboard

From time to time the Plains Indians had to move their camps to follow the buffalo herds. The whole tribe gathered up their belongings, including their tepees.

At first these Indians did not have horses, but when the Spanish came to America, they brought horses with them. Some of these horses went wild, and the Indians learned to tame and ride them.

The Indians became very good at hunting buffalo from galloping horses. Sometimes they ran the buffalo over a steep cliff and killed a thousand buffalo at one time. By slicing and drying the buffalo meat, the Indians could save most of the meat to eat later.

The women of the Plains Indian tribes did not grow corn as the Indian women of the eastern tribes did. Instead they tanned buffalo skins and made clothing. They removed the hair from the skin of the buffalo and washed the skins in a nearby river. They rubbed oil into the skins and finally smoked them. In this way the buffalo skins could be used to make tepees.

The women made clothes from deerskin or buckskin. They used beads to decorate clothes and belts and moccasins.



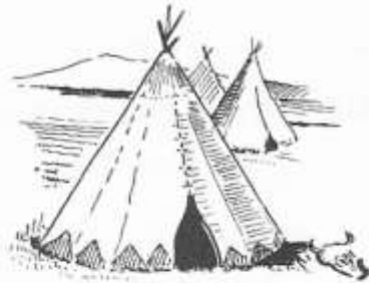
An Indian mother liked to carry her papoose with her wherever she went. She wrapped her baby in a buckskin blanket and then strapped it to a cradleboard. She tied the cradleboard to her back and always knew her papoose was close by.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. Find the Great Plains on your map.
2. How did the Plains Indians kill buffalo?
3. What did the Indians use buffalo for?
4. How did the Plains Indian women spend their time?
5. Why did the Plains Indians move around so much?
6. How are the Plains Indians different from the Indians who lived in the East?





## The Indians of the Northwest

The Indians of the northwest coast of America knew how to hunt whales and seals and how to catch salmon.

Hunting whales was very dangerous because the Indians had only war canoes, which are much smaller than whales. When the canoe got close to the whale, the leader threw his harpoon at the whale, and then the other Indians in the canoe did the same. One end of a rope was tied to a harpoon, and the other end was tied to the boat.

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### WORDS TO WATCH

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northwest coast  
seal

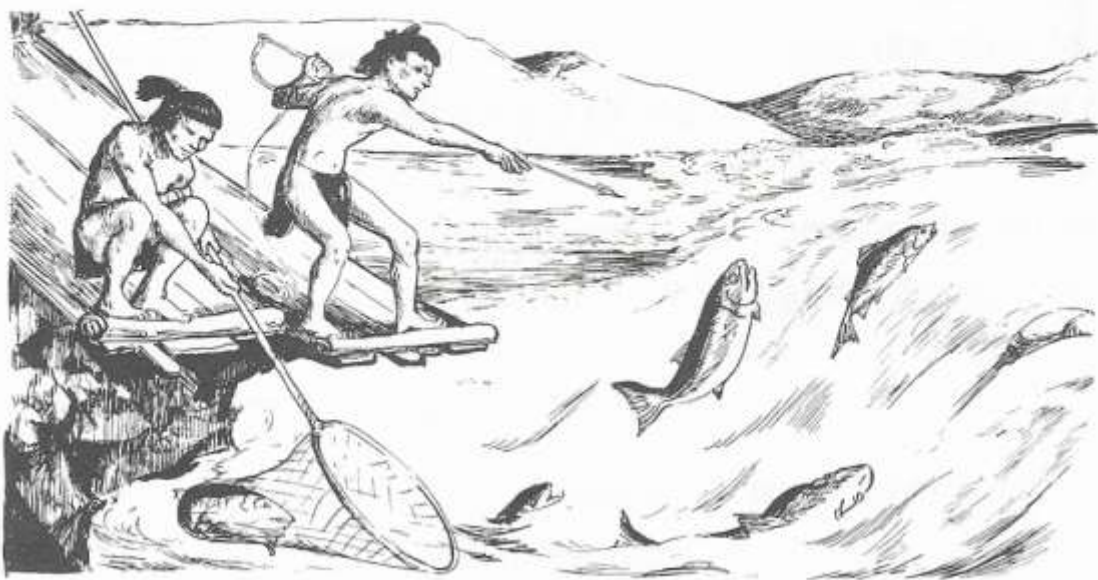
salmon  
harpoon

lodges  
totem pole

The whale is a huge animal. It usually swims for a long time before it dies. A wounded whale could pull the canoe far out into the ocean so that the hunters had to drag the dead whale back to shore. They did this hard work gladly because they liked to eat whale meat and had many uses for the whale oil.

The Indians of the Northwest caught salmon with spears or in traps. Indian boys knew how to spear salmon. An Indian boy would stand on the bank of a river at the foot of a waterfall and wait for the salmon to swim up near the falls. Then he would aim his spear at a big salmon and throw it. If his aim was good, he could bring enough food home to his mother to last a long time.

The Indians of the Northwest did not have to move around as much as the Plains Indians did, so they built strong houses called lodges. They were made of big cedar trees, which they cut down with stone hatchets. These lodges were big enough for many families to live in.



Outside the lodge they put up a totem pole. These totem poles were very tall, and the Indians carved faces and animals on them, one on top of another. Some of these faces looked very strange and frightening. Totem poles told a story, and the Indians of each tribe knew what these stories were. But totem poles do not talk, and from us they keep their stories a secret.



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#### QUESTIONS

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1. In what ways were the Indians of the Northwest different from the Plains Indians and the Indians in the East?
2. How did these Indians hunt whales?
3. How did they hunt fish?
4. What kind of houses did they live in?
5. Find on your map where the Indians of the East, the Plains Indians, and the Indians of the Northwest lived.

## Plurals to Watch

### I. Read and Spell:

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
child	children	calf	calves
mouse	mice	goose	geese
life	lives	man	men
loaf	loaves	fish	fish
woman	women	moose	moose
city	cities	leaf	leaves

### II. Read and Answer:

1. Spell the plural form of these words:

deer	thief	scarf	penny	monkey
lady	valley	ox	louse	brother-in-law

2. Think of some other words that have tricky plurals.

### III. Write:

1. Write five sentences, each one using both the singular and the plural form of a word on this page. Here is an example to help you:

Some men are afraid, but that man is brave.



## The Pilgrims

In the middle of the Atlantic Ocean a little ship was tossed about in a fierce storm. The lightning cracked, the thunder roared, and huge waves washed over the decks.

“It’s a terrible night,” said Captain Jones. “I hope we live through it.”

“We’ll live through it,” replied William Brewster. “Nothing will keep us from reaching America. It is God’s will.”

---

### WORDS TO WATCH

---

Pilgrims

Atlantic Ocean

lightning

Captain Jones

William Brewster

*Mayflower*

The name of this little ship was the *Mayflower*, and the people on it were Pilgrims. The Pilgrims were English people, but they did not want to live in England any longer because the king would not let them worship God as they wished.

For many weeks the *Mayflower* tossed about on the ocean, but at last it reached America. As soon as the Pilgrims set foot on the land, they thanked God for bringing them safely to their new home.

The Pilgrims landed in America in the middle of winter, so they had to build a shelter at once. At first they built a log house big enough to hold all of them, but later they built houses for each family.

The winter was long and cold. Sometimes they did not have enough to eat, and before spring came, many of them had become sick and died.

The only people the Pilgrims met were Indians. At first the Pilgrims were afraid of the Indians, but the Indian chief was very friendly. He brought other Indians to talk with the Pilgrims, and soon the Indians and the Pilgrims were good friends.

In the spring the *Mayflower* went back to England. The Pilgrims watched longingly as the ship sailed away without them, but they had made their choice. It was right for them to stay. This was their new land, their home, and now they were free to worship as they pleased.

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#### QUESTIONS

---

1. Why did the Pilgrims leave England?

2. Why was life hard for the Pilgrims in America?
3. How did the Indians act toward the Pilgrims?
4. When the *Mayflower* went back to England, why did the Pilgrims not go back to England too?
5. Find out more about the Pilgrims.
6. What is Plymouth Rock, and where is it?
7. Find Plymouth on your map of the United States in the back of your book.

## The North Wind Doth Blow

*Anonymous*

The north wind doth blow,  
And we shall have snow,  
And what will poor robin do then?  
Poor thing!

He'll sit in a barn,  
And to keep himself warm,  
Will hide his head under his wing.  
Poor thing!

# The First Thanksgiving

During the first winter in America the Pilgrims suffered terribly. They had only a few small huts, and many died of sickness and hunger.

In the springtime the Pilgrims and the Indians became friends.

An Indian named Squanto showed them how to plant corn—four kernels to each hillock. He also showed them how to catch herring from the brook to use for food. Then he showed them how to tap maple trees for their sugary sap and where to find fat eels.

That first summer life was no longer so cruel. The Pilgrims' crops ripened in the sun. The first autumn was beautiful, and the harvest was rich. The Pilgrims were thankful to be alive, and they planned a day of Thanksgiving for a harvest feast.

Squanto was sent to invite the braves to the feast. Four Pilgrims went hunting and returned with enough ducks and geese for a week. They shot wild turkey too, for there were many of them near Plymouth.

---

## WORDS TO WATCH

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Squanto	eels	venison
kernels	braves	lobster
hillock	Plymouth	costumes
herring	upset	feathers
brook	ornaments	Thanksgiving



When the Indians arrived, ninety strong, they saw that the Pilgrims were upset. They could not feed so many. The chief understood and sent a few men to the forest. They returned, bringing five deer to share. They had goose and venison, lobster, eel pie, corn, bread, salad, plums, berries, and red and white wine. The Indians had such a good time that they stayed for three days. They dressed up in their best costumes with bright feathers and gay ornaments to dance and sing.

Finally the first Thanksgiving came to an end, and the Indians went back into the forest.

Every year, after the harvest in late November, we still set aside a day of Thanksgiving to remind us of the Pilgrims and to thank God for all the good things that are in our country.

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## QUESTIONS

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1. Why did the Pilgrims have a Thanksgiving Day?
2. What did they eat on the first Thanksgiving?
3. What did the Indians bring to the feast?
4. What happened after the feast?
5. Why do we still have a Thanksgiving Day every year?

## Good Tidings

*Anonymous*

A sunshiny shower  
Won't last half an hour.

Rain before seven  
Stops before eleven.

March winds and April showers  
Bring forth beautiful May flowers.

## Verbs to Watch

### I. Read and Spell:

<i>Today I</i>	<i>Yesterday I</i>	<i>Many times I have</i>
see	saw	seen
go	went	gone
do	did	done
eat	ate	eaten
drink	drank	drunk
begin	began	begun
fall	fell	fallen
know	knew	known

### II. Read and Answer

1. What are the other two forms of these verbs?

grow	bite	speak	swim	take	ring
sing	drive	sit	swing	throw	fly

2. Can you think of some other tricky verbs?

### III. Write

Write five sentences using some of the verbs listed above. Be sure to use verbs from all three lists in Part I.

# Early Explorers of Our Country

Marquette and Joliet took their birch canoes down the Wisconsin River to the Mississippi River, even though friendly Indians warned of the hidden dangers ahead. The Indians told them about great monsters that ate men and canoes and about the unfriendly Indians that would kill them.

But Marquette and Joliet wanted to go anyway. They would not turn back for fear of the monsters or the dangerous Indians.

These first white men to see the middle of our country were Frenchmen who came from Canadian settlements. They were sent as missionaries to preach to the Indians and as traders to buy furs from the Indians.

Marquette was a priest and Joliet a trader. They traveled in two canoes. They took smoked meat and Indian corn to eat on the way and trinkets to trade with the Indians.

---

## WORDS TO WATCH

---

Marquette	Canadian settlement	Iowa
Joliet	priest	Illinois tribe
Wisconsin River	trader	mush
Mississippi River	trinkets	peace pipe
Frenchmen	hatchets	Canada



Hatchets and beads and bits of cloth were used as money to pay the Indians for what they wanted.

For two weeks the travelers paddled down the river, and in all this time they did not see a single Indian. After they had gone hundreds of miles in this way, they came to a place where they saw tracks in the mud. This part of the country is now called the state of Iowa.

Marquette and Joliet left the men in their canoes and followed the tracks. After walking two hours, they came to an Indian village. They sneaked up near enough to hear the Indians talking, but the Indians did not see them.

Joliet and Marquette did not know whether the Indians would kill them or not, so they said a short prayer. Then they stood out in full view and gave a loud shout.

The Indians swarmed out of their tents like bees and stared at the strangers. When four Indians came toward them, they



carried a peace pipe, which they held up toward the sun. This meant that they were friendly.

The Indians now offered the peace pipe to the Frenchmen. The Frenchmen took it and smoked with the Indians. This was the Indian way of saying, "We are friends."

These were Indians of the Illinois tribe, and they took Joliet and Marquette into their village. As they came to a large wigwam, they met a chief who stood in the doorway. He shaded his eyes with both hands as if the sun were shining in his face. Then he made a little speech.

He said, "Frenchmen, how bright the sun shines when you come to see us! We are all waiting for you. You shall now come into our houses in peace."

The Illinois Indians made a feast for their new friends. First they had mush of corn meal with fat meat in it. One of the Indians fed the Frenchmen as if they were babies by putting the mush into their mouths with a large spoon.

This same Indian then put pieces of fish into the visitors' mouths after he had picked out the bones with his fingers. The roast dog that followed was not so tasty, but the Frenchmen liked the buffalo meat.

The next morning 600 of the Illinois Indians went with the Frenchmen to the Mississippi River to say good-bye. The Indians gave the Frenchmen a peace pipe to carry with them and wished them a safe journey.

When Joliet and Marquette returned to Canada, they had many strange tales to tell. In those days the middle of our country was indeed an exciting and very dangerous place to be.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. What did Marquette and Joliet set out to find?
2. What did they take with them to give to the Indians?
3. Find the route of Marquette and Joliet on your historical map.
4. What things did the Illinois Indians do to show that they were friendly to Marquette and Joliet?
5. Why do you think the Indians gave them a peace pipe when they left?
6. Would you like to have lived 300 years ago in America? Why?



## Our Country's Birthday

Our country's birthday is the Fourth of July, which is one of our great holidays. We celebrate the Fourth of July because we want to remember the day our country was born. On that day there are parades and picnics, and when night comes, many people gather to watch fireworks light up the sky.

At first our country was only a group of colonies. There were thirteen American colonies, and they all belonged to England. But England is a country far across the Atlantic

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### WORDS TO WATCH

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free

taxes

Declaration of Independence

right

created

Thomas Jefferson

colonies

equal

Atlantic Ocean

fireworks

holidays

England

Ocean, and the king of England did not care much about the people who lived in America. He tried to make them obey laws and pay taxes that they thought were unfair.

The leaders of the American colonies wanted America to be free from England. One of these leaders was Thomas Jefferson. He wrote the Declaration of Independence, which told the world that America was going to make itself free from England.

For seventeen days Jefferson sat at his desk and wrote and rewrote. He had always believed that people could rule themselves, and so he thought that they should be free. He was not a soldier like George Washington, but he fought for what he believed was right. He fought with his pen.

His words in the Declaration of Independence have become famous around the world. Men are still fighting for the freedom he wrote about.

In the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson wrote, "All men are created equal." He also said that the poor and the rich had the same right to live and be free and happy.

On the Fourth of July in the year 1776, the leaders of the American colonies voted for the Declaration of Independence. On this day our country was born. A few days later the leaders told the people what they had done. When the people heard the good news, they shouted, "Hooray for the United States." The thirteen colonies became the first thirteen states of the United States of America.

The people never forgot our nation's first birthday, and we will not forget it either.

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## QUESTIONS

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1. How do people celebrate the Fourth of July?
2. Why did the American people want to be free from England?
3. When was America's first birthday?
4. What is the Declaration of Independence?
5. What did Jefferson write in the Declaration of Independence?



## States of the United States

### I. Read and Pronounce

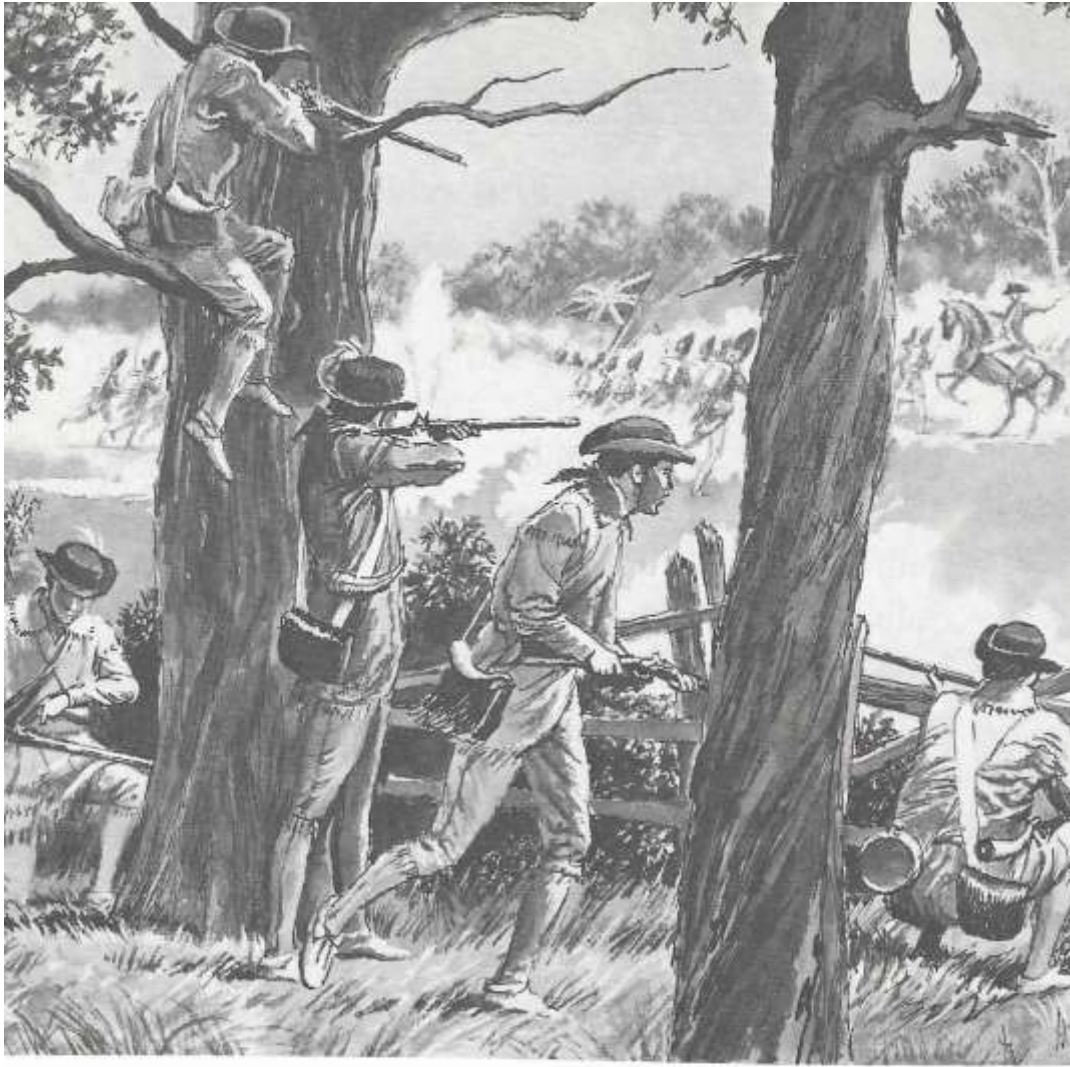
Alabama	Louisiana	North Dakota
Alaska	Maine	Ohio
Arizona	Maryland	Oklahoma
Arkansas	Massachusetts	Oregon
California	Michigan	Pennsylvania
Colorado	Minnesota	Rhode Island
Connecticut	Mississippi	South Carolina
Delaware	Missouri	South Dakota
Florida	Montana	Tennessee
Georgia	Nebraska	Texas
Hawaii	Nevada	Utah
Idaho	New Hampshire	Vermont
Illinois	New Jersey	Virginia
Indiana	New Mexico	Washington
Iowa	New York	West Virginia
Kansas	North Carolina	Wisconsin
Kentucky		Wyoming

### II. Read and Answer

1. Find these states on your map of the United States.
2. Find out which states touch your state.

### III. Write

Write about the state you live in or the state you like best.



## How Our Country Became Free

The Declaration of Independence was signed and all thirteen American colonies demanded to be free from English rule. But the king of England said that the colonies still belonged to England, so he sent soldiers to fight the Americans.

The Americans had many difficulties while fighting the British. They had no trained army, few guns and cannons, and no navy. People thought the Americans could not win the war for freedom.

But the Americans wanted to be free more than anything else. They asked George Washington to lead their army because they knew he was a brave soldier and a great leader. Under his direction the American colonists fought against the British soldiers. This war was called the Revolutionary War.

One of the most important battles was fought at Saratoga. General Gates was the leader of the American soldiers then. One day a scout came into the headquarters of General Gates.

“What news do you bring?” General Gates asked.

“The British are only four miles away, and they are moving toward the camp,” the scout replied.

Then the Americans knew that this battle could decide the whole war. If they lost, New England would be cut off from the other colonies. Many volunteers streamed in to help the American army.

The next day the British army was at Saratoga, and the battle was on! Gates attacked first and forced the British back. The British fought hard, but the American sharpshooters pushed back one line and then another. General Arnold, second in command, smashed into the English lines, and there was much man-to-man fighting. Just

as evening came General Arnold was wounded. But he shouted, "Carry on! Carry on! Victory is ours!"

Then the unbelievable happened. The Americans surrounded the British, and a few days later the British surrendered.

The Battle of Saratoga showed other countries that the Americans could win important battles. Soon afterward France agreed to help the Americans and sent over ships with men and supplies.

At last the Americans won the long war. The British had to give up their thirteen colonies. The colonies became the United States of America.

The Americans had to fight hard to earn their freedom. Today we often think of the many brave soldiers who gave their lives so that our country could be free.

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WORDS TO WATCH

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Declaration of Independence	rule	cannon
George Washington	headquarters	British
General Arnold	General Gates	unbelievable
sharpshooters	New England	freedom
Saratoga	volunteers	

---

QUESTIONS

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1. Why did the Americans fight a war against England?
2. What is this war called?
3. Where was an important battle fought?
4. Why did the Americans almost lose the war?
5. Who helped the Americans win the war?

# Lewis and Clark

When Thomas Jefferson was President, he wanted to learn more about the western part of America. He sent Lewis and Clark to find out as much as they could about the animals, the mountains, and the Indians of the Great West.

Lewis and Clark needed someone with them who could speak with the Indians to the north and west, especially the Pahkees and the Shoshones. They chose a man who was part Indian and part French. His Indian wife, Sacajewea, came too. She was a Shoshone who had lived among the Pahkees. Her name means "Bird Woman."

Lewis and Clark were afraid at first that a squaw would be in the way on such a trip. But later they found that many tribes greeted them with friendliness when they saw Bird Woman. She was a sign to the Indians that the explorers came in peace.

With her papoose strapped to her back, Bird Woman and her husband became guides for Lewis and Clark. They went through many dangers and difficulties with the two great explorers. Once they almost starved. Another time, Clark and

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## WORDS TO WATCH

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Thomas Jefferson	squaw	guides
Lewis	wilderness	explorers
Clark	Sacajawea	Shoshones
Great West	papoose	St. Louis
diary		continent

Bird Woman were caught in a great storm. The place where they were standing for shelter began to fill up with water. They were helped out of that dangerous place by York.

York was the first black man the Indians had ever seen. He stood over six feet tall. He was strong, kind, and dignified. But he also liked to join with the other men in making the Indians laugh. York helped to build canoes. He hunted for buffalo, bear, and antelope. One night a buffalo charged through the camp. It almost trampled Clark. The next morning, York found that his rifle had been bent by the buffalo's feet.

The explorers had many narrow escapes from grizzly bears, too. One day six men went hunting. All six of them shot a huge bear, but the bear kept charging at them. Two men jumped into the river to save their lives, but the bear jumped right in after them. Finally, one man on the river bank shot the bear through the head and killed him.

The explorers ate whatever animals they could kill. But it was hard to make good meals in the wilderness. Bird Woman knew where to find "wapato" or wild potato. She would dig them up and put them in soups. She knew how to break and boil the elk bones to get the most out of them. She could mend clothes with her needles of small bird bones and thread of hide. She also made leather moccasins for the explorers.

She led the explorers to the place where her own tribe lived. As they got closer, the explorers divided into two groups. Lewis went by land, Clark by river. Bird Woman was with Clark.



Lewis was the first to see a Shoshone. The Indian brave was riding a horse. As Lewis came near, the Indian turned and rode away. Lewis was disappointed. He needed to trade with the Shoshones for horses to cross the mountains.

Later that day, he met three Indian squaws. They said they would lead him to the Shoshone camp. As they were on their way, sixty Indians on horseback rode toward them. They were Shoshones. When they saw that Lewis was a white man, they greeted him warmly. They held a feast and danced till midnight.

The Shoshones feared that their enemies, the Pahkees, might be using Lewis to trap them. Lewis tried to calm them. He gave the chief his gun and told him to use it as he thought best. He dressed like a Shoshone to show that he did not fear a Pahkee attack.

Finally, Clark arrived. When Bird Woman saw the members of her own tribe, she began to dance for joy. The Shoshones also laughed and sang.

That evening, Lewis and Clark sat down with the Indians.

It took two years and four months for Lewis and Clark to travel to the Pacific Ocean and back. Many thought they would never return alive. But when they came back to St. Louis, everyone who could walk came to the celebration.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. What did President Jefferson tell Lewis and Clark to do?
2. How did York and Bird Woman help Lewis and Clark?
3. What do you think were some of the dangers these men faced?
4. Why was it important for Lewis and Clark to make this trip?

## Raindrops

Softly the rain goes pitter-patter,  
Softly the rain comes falling down.  
Hark to the people who hurry by;  
Raindrops are footsteps from out of the sky!  
Softly the rain goes pitter-patter,  
Softly the rain comes falling down.

## Big Cities in the United States

### I. Read and Pronounce

Boston	Atlanta	Houston
Detroit	Oklahoma City	Los Angeles
Cleveland	Louisville	Philadelphia
Salt Lake City	New York City	St. Louis
Kansas City	Milwaukee	Minneapolis
Portland	Birmingham	Indianapolis
Chicago	Denver	Pittsburgh
Baltimore	Honolulu	San Francisco
Omaha	Memphis	Buffalo
New Orleans	Richmond	Washington, D.C.
Seattle	Dallas	Tulsa

### II. Read and Answer

1. What is the biggest city in your state?
2. What is the capital city of your state?
3. Find out in which state each of the cities in Part I is located.
4. What are the five biggest cities in the United States?
5. Name some other big cities in the United States.
6. See how many names of cities in Part I you can spell.

### III. Write

Write about the city you live in or a city where you have been.



## Pioneers Go West in Covered Wagons

*Frances Cavanah*

More and more pioneers went west to live. Some of them went to Texas, others to Oregon. Anyone willing to work hard could own a farm out west.

When gold was found in California, people all over the world were excited.

“Let’s go to California and get rich,” they said. “The gold is in the ground. All we have to do is dig it up.”

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### WORDS TO WATCH

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Texas	covered wagon	keeping watch
Oregon	banjo	guard
California	circle	figures

Most of the pioneers rode west in big covered wagons or on horseback. Several families went together so that they could help one another. At night the wagons were drawn up in a circle. Campfires were lighted, and the women cooked supper. Afterward someone played a banjo while the others sang:

“O California! That’s the land for me,  
I’m going to California, the gold dust for to see.”

When bedtime came, the people and animals slept inside the circle of wagons. The men took turns keeping watch.

West of the Mississippi they travelled across plains and mountains. This was a wild land where only Indians lived. The Indians did not want the white people to come into their country. They attacked the wagons whenever they had a chance.

Often the guard saw dark figures creeping along the ground. “Indians!” he shouted. “The Indians are coming.”

The pioneers grabbed their guns. Shot after shot rang out until the red men were driven off their hunting grounds. Many Indians and also many white people were killed in these attacks. Other pioneers were caught in snowstorms when they crossed the mountains. But they went on and on until they came to California.

Taking their picks and shovels, many of the men began digging in the ground for gold. Some of them became rich. Others found no gold at all. But they found something much

better—a rich, beautiful land of tall trees and fruits and flowers.

Many of the pioneers stayed in California, and they made the beautiful cities and farms and roads that you can see for yourself today.

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#### QUESTIONS

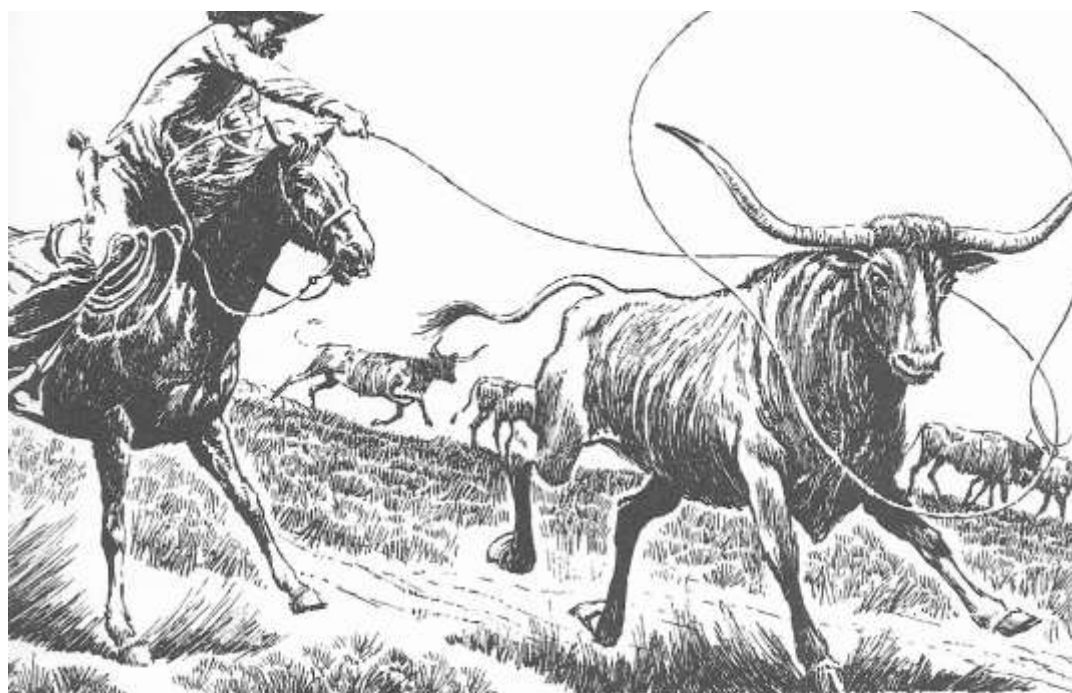
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1. Why did many pioneers go to California?
2. What dangers did the pioneers face in travelling westward?
3. What did the pioneers find that was better than gold?

## Way Down South

*American Folk Rhyme*

Way down South where bananas grow,  
A grasshopper stepped on an elephant's toe.  
The elephant said with tears in his eyes,  
“Pick on somebody your own size.”



## Cowboys Ride in the Wild West

*Frances Cavanah*

After the pioneers had settled in the West, cowboys came to live on the plains east of the Rocky Mountains. They drove herds of cattle up from Texas to graze on the tall grass. Each spring and fall they rounded up the calves.

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### WORDS TO WATCH

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battle  
government  
reservation  
calves

Rocky Mountains  
dogies  
law  
herds

grasslands  
rustlers  
thieves  
graze

Twirl-twirl! A cowboy would twirl a long rope, making the end into a circle. The rope flew through the air. It landed around the calf's neck. Thousands of calves were caught in this way.

"Whoopee! Git along, little dogies," the cowboys sang, as they drove the little calves up the trail to the rich grasslands in the North.

For a long time the land west of the Mississippi was called the Wild West. Robbers held up trains. Rustlers, or thieves, stole cattle. But at last most of the bad men were driven out. Cowboys looked after the cattle on big ranches. New pioneers came to the plains and started farms.

The Wild West had become tame.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. What was the cowboy's job?
2. Why was the West called the "Wild West?"
3. How did the "Wild West" become tame?

## Important Events in American History

### **I. Read and Pronounce**

The Discovery of America

The Coming of the Pilgrims

The Signing of the Declaration of Independence

The Revolutionary War

The Settling of the Great West

The Civil War and the Freeing of the Slaves

The First World War

The Second World War

### **II. Read and Answer**

1. What do you know about these events? Why are they important?
2. Find out more about these events.
3. Think of some other important events in American history.

### **III. Write**

1. Write five sentences, each one telling something about an important historical event named on this page.
2. Write a story about one of these events.

## Review Questions for Part One

1. You have read these stories in your book. Tell what each one is about:

How America Was Discovered

Pocahontas and Captain John Smith

The Indians

The Pilgrims

The First Thanksgiving

Our Country's Birthday

How Our Country Became Free

Lewis and Clark

Pioneers Go West in Covered Wagons

Cowboys Ride in the Wild West

2. Which story did you like best? Why?
3. Write a story about one of these people and why he is important:

Columbus

George Washington

Thomas Jefferson

Lewis and Clark

## PART TWO

*Stories and Poems  
Everyone Likes*

# The Real Princess

*Hans Christian Andersen*

A long time ago there was a prince who wanted to marry a princess—but she had to be a *real* princess. He traveled all over the world looking for one.

There were many princesses, but there was always something about them that was not quite right. At last the prince had to give up, and he returned to his castle. He was sad because he wanted a *real* princess very much.

One night there was a terrible storm. The lightning flashed, the thunder roared, and the rain came down in torrents. It was a fearful night. Suddenly a knock was heard on the castle gate. The old king himself went down to see who it was.

There, standing outside in the rain, stood a princess. She didn't look like a princess because her hair and clothes were soaking wet and water was streaming out of her shoes.

"I am a princess," she said. "May I find shelter here tonight?"

The king kindly invited her in, and then he went to tell the queen.

"We will soon see if she is a real princess," said the queen to herself. She went into a room to get a bed ready for the princess. She took all the bedclothes off the bed and laid a pea on the bedstead. Then she took twenty mattresses and

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## WORDS TO WATCH

---

torrents

mattress

museum



put them on top of the pea. Then on top of the mattresses she piled twenty feather beds. The princess was to sleep on top of all these mattresses and feather beds.

The next morning the queen asked her if she had slept well.

"It was terrible," said the princess. "I hardly closed my eyes the whole night. Heaven knows what was in the bed. I was lying on something so hard that I am black and blue all over."

When the queen heard this, she knew the girl was a *real* princess, for only a *real* princess could feel a pea through twenty mattresses and twenty feather beds.

The prince was overjoyed to find a real princess. He took her for his wife the very next day, and the pea was put into a museum for everyone to see.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. Why was the prince sad?
2. How did the queen test the girl to see if she was a real princess?
3. What did the princess say when the queen asked her if she had slept well?
4. What happened after the prince found out that the princess was a real princess?



## The Tardy Teacher

*Edward Eggleston*

In the schools of long ago, a student who did not behave in class was beaten by the teacher with a switch or a stick. The teacher hit the student hard enough so that it really hurt. But in the city of Philadelphia before the Revolutionary War, there was a teacher named Mr. Dove, who did not beat the students.

When a boy behaved badly in class, Mr. Dove would not beat him with a switch; instead he would stick the switch into the back of the boy's coat collar so that it would rise in the air above his head. Then the boy had to stand up on a bench in

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### WORDS TO WATCH

---

behave  
Philadelphia

Revolutionary War  
Mr. Dove

ashamed  
tardy

front of the other students and feel ashamed for not behaving himself.

If a student did not come to school on time, Mr. Dove would send five or six boys to bring the tardy student to school. One of these boys would carry a lighted lantern, and another would carry a bell. The tardy student had to march down the street in broad daylight. One of the boys would walk behind him and ring the bell to show that the tardy student should be in school, and another would walk in front of him with the lighted lantern to show him the way.

One morning Mr. Dove himself slept too late. When the boys saw that he did not come to school on time, they took the lighted lantern and the bell and went to his house to get him. They brought him to school with one boy ringing the bell behind him and another boy walking in front of him with the lighted lantern. Mr. Dove told the boys that they were right because everybody should try to be on time no matter who he is.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. How did Mr. Dove punish students who did not behave in class?
2. What happened when a boy did not come to school on time?
3. Why was Mr. Dove not angry when the boys came after him to take him to school?

## Things to Collect

### I. Read and Spell

stamps	plants	autographs
coins	matchbooks	photographs
poems	pictures	stories
insects	flowers	seashells
butterflies	books	rare things
leaves	postcards	anything

### II. Read and Answer

1. Which of these things do not cost money to collect?
2. Which of these things do you collect?
3. What would you like most to collect?
4. Name some other things to collect.

### III. Write

1. Write five sentences, each using a word in Part I.
2. Write about what you collect or would like to collect.

# The Wind and the Sun

*Aesop*

Once the wind and the sun had a great quarrel. The wind said he was stronger than the sun. The sun said he was stronger than the wind. They wished for some way to see which was the stronger.

Soon a man came along the road.

"See that man," said the wind. "I can make him take off his coat."

"No, you cannot," said the sun, "but I can."

"We will try," they both said.

"The wind said he would try first. He blew as hard as he could. What a noise he made!

The man said, "It is very cold." So he did not take off his coat.

At last the wind said, "I cannot make the man take off his coat."

Then the sun tried. He made no noise. He shone hotter and hotter.

"How warm it is!" said the man. Then he took off his coat.

"See what I did!" said the sun to the wind. "I made the man take off his coat. I am stronger than you."

Which do you think was the stronger, the wind or the sun?



# Good Morning, Merry Sunshine

*Anonymous*

Good morning, merry sunshine,  
How did you wake so soon?  
You've scared the little stars away,  
And shined away the moon;  
I saw you go to sleep last night,  
Before I ceased my playing.  
How did you get 'way over here,  
And where have you been staying?

I never go to sleep, dear;  
I just go round to see  
My little children of the East  
Who rise and watch for me.  
I waken all the birds and bees,  
And flowers on the way,  
And last of all the little child  
Who stayed out late to play.





# Rumpelstiltskin

*Brothers Grimm*

There was once a miller who was poor, but he had one beautiful daughter. It happened one day that he came to speak to the king, and in order to make himself seem important, he told him that he had a daughter who could spin gold out of straw. The king said to the miller,

“That is an art that pleases me well. If your daughter is as clever as you say, bring her to my castle tomorrow, and I will see if she can do as you have told me.”

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## WORDS TO WATCH

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Rumpelstiltskin  
spindle  
bobbin

necessity  
astonished  
messenger  
Caspar

Melchior  
Balthazar  
seize

When the girl was brought to him, he led her into a room full of straw and gave her a wheel and spindle and said,

“Now set to work, and if by the early morning you have not spun this straw into gold, you shall die.” And he shut the door and left her there alone.

The poor miller’s daughter did not know what to do. She had no idea how to spin straw into gold. She was so unhappy that she began to cry. Then all at once the door opened, and in came a little man.

“Good evening, miller’s daughter,” he said, “why are you crying?”

“Oh,” answered the girl, “I have to spin gold out of this straw, and I don’t know how.”

Then the little man said,

“What will you give me if I spin it for you?”

“My necklace,” said the girl.

The little man took the necklace, seated himself before the wheel, and whirr, whirr, whirr! three times round and the bobbin was full. Then he took up another bunch of straw and whirr, whirr, whirr! three times round and that was full, and so he went on until the morning. By then all the straw had been spun, and all the bobbins were full of gold.

At sunrise the king returned. When he saw the gold, he was astonished and overjoyed because he was very greedy. He had the miller’s daughter taken into another room filled with straw, much bigger than the last, and told her that if she valued her life, she must spin it all in one night. The girl did

not know what to do, so she began to cry, and then the door opened, and the little man appeared again and said,

“What will you give me if I spin all this straw into gold?”

“The ring from my finger,” answered the girl.

So the little man took the ring and began again to send the wheel whirring round, and by the next morning all the straw was spun into glistening gold. The king rejoiced at the sight. But he could never have enough gold, so he had the miller’s daughter taken into a still larger room full of straw, and he said,

“This, too, must be spun in one night, and if you can do it you shall be my wife.” For he thought, “Although she is only a miller’s daughter, I am not likely to find any one richer in the whole world.”

As soon as the girl was left alone, the little man appeared for the third time and said,

“What will you give me if I spin the straw for you this time?”

“I have nothing left to give,” answered the girl.

“Then you must promise me the first child you have after you are queen,” said the little man.

“But who knows whether that will happen?” thought the girl. But since she did not know what else to do, she promised the little man what he desired. Then he began to spin until all the straw was gold. And when in the morning the king came and found all done according to his wish, he ordered the

wedding to be held at once, and the miller's pretty daughter became a queen.

In a year's time she brought a fine child into the world and thought no more of the little man, but one day he came suddenly into her room and said,

"Now give me what you promised me."

The queen was terrified, and she offered the little man all the riches of the kingdom if he would only leave the child, but the little man said, "No, I would rather have something living than all the treasures in the world."

Then the queen began to cry. She cried so hard that the little man took pity on her.

"I will give you three days," said he, "and if at the end of that time you cannot tell my name, you must give up the child to me."

Then the queen spent the whole night in thinking over all the names that she ever heard and sent a messenger through the land to ask far and wide for all the names that could be found. And when the little man came next day she repeated all the names she knew, like Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. She went through the whole list, but after each one the little man said,

"That is not my name."

The second day the queen sent to inquire of all the neighbors what their servants were called, and she told the little man all the unusual names she could find.



“Perhaps you are Roast-ribs,” she said, “or Sheepshanks, or Spindleshanks?” But all he answered was,

“That is not my name.”

The third day the messenger came back again and said,

“I have not been able to find one single new name, but as I passed through the woods, I came to a high hill, and near it was a little house, and before the house burned a fire, and round the fire danced a funny little man, hopping on one leg and crying,

‘Today I bake, tomorrow I brew,

The day after that the queen’s child comes in;

And Oh! I am glad that nobody knew

That the name I am called is Rumpelstiltskin!’ ”

You cannot think how pleased the queen was to hear that name! Soon afterward the little man walked in and asked,

“Now, Mrs. Queen, what is my name?”

“Are you called Jack?” she said at first.

“That is not my name,” he answered.

“Are you called Harry?” she asked again.

“That is not my name,” he said.

“Then perhaps your name is Rumpelstiltskin!”

“The devil told you that! The devil told you that!” cried the little man, and in his anger he stamped with his right foot so hard that it went into the ground above his knee. Then he seized his left foot with both his hands in such a fury that he split in two, and that was the end of him.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. Why did the miller tell the king that his daughter could spin straw into gold?
2. What did the miller's daughter give Rumpelstiltskin the first time he spun straw into gold? The second time? The third time?
3. When Rumpelstiltskin saw the queen crying and took pity on her, what did he say to her?
4. How did the queen find out what Rumpelstiltskin's name was?
5. Do you feel sorry for Rumpelstiltskin? Why?
6. Which person in this story do you like the least? Why?

## Ways to Travel

### I. Read and Spell

airplane	train	bus
camel	canoe	streetcar
dog sled	legs	elevator
bicycle	elephant	skis
horse	speedboat	automobile
ocean liner	subway	spaceship

### II. Read and Answer

1. Which is the oldest way of travelling?
2. Which is the fastest way of travelling?
3. What is the slowest way of travelling?
4. What way would you like most to travel?
5. What way would you like least to travel?

### III. Write

1. Write five sentences, each using a word in Part I.
2. Write a little story about a trip you have taken.

# The Adventures of Tom Thumb

## *English Folk Tale* *Part One*

Once upon a time a powerful magician named Merlin was walking down a hot, dusty road. He had changed himself into a beggar, and he was tired and hungry from walking in the hot sun. Soon he came to a farmhouse. He knocked on the door to ask for some food and a place to rest.

The farmer invited him in, and his good-hearted wife got him a bowl of milk and a plate of brown bread. Merlin thanked them and began to eat. When he had finished his meal, he began to look around the room. He saw that it was neat and comfortable, but he saw, too, that the farmer and his wife were very unhappy.

"You have a pretty little little cottage and all you need to live on. Why are you so sad?" asked the magician.

"It is because we have no children," said the poor woman, with tears in her eyes. "I would be the happiest creature in the world if I had a son, even though he might be no bigger than my husband's thumb."

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### WORDS TO WATCH

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Merlin	bewitched	apron
beggar	tinker	raven
creature	wringing	swoop
thistle	thread	King Arthur



Merlin thought that the idea of a boy no bigger than a man's thumb was very funny.

The next morning Merlin thanked the farmer and his wife for their kindness, and before he left, he said, "You will get your wish."

The farmer and his wife did not know what to think, but soon afterward a son was born to them, and he really was no bigger than a man's thumb.

The queen of the fairies heard about this little boy who was no larger than a man's thumb, and she came to visit him. She kissed him and gave him the name Tom Thumb. Then she ordered her fairies to make him some clothes. They made his hat out of an oak leaf, his shirt of spider webs, his jacket of the down of a thistle, his trousers of feathers, and his shoes from a mouse's skin.

One day Tom was watching his mother making some batter for a pudding. Tom was curious to see how it was made, so he climbed upon the edge of the bowl. Suddenly his

foot slipped, and he fell head over heels into the batter. His mother did not notice him. She kept on stirring the batter; then she poured the batter into a pot and set it on the fire to boil.

Tom's mouth filled up with batter so that he couldn't cry out. Soon he began to feel the hot water, and he began kicking and struggling in the pot. His mother thought that the pudding was bewitched, so she took the pot off the stove and threw the pudding outside the door.

Just then a tinker was passing by. He saw the pudding, picked it up, dusted it off, and was just about to eat it. But by now Tom had got his mouth cleared of the batter, and he began to cry out. Tom's cries so frightened the tinker that he dropped the pudding and ran off.

The pudding bowl broke to pieces by the fall, and Tom, who was covered all over with batter, crawled out and ran home.

His mother felt very sorry to see him in such a terrible state. She prepared a bath for him in a teacup and soon washed the batter off him. Then she kissed him and laid him on his bed.

One day Tom's mother went to milk her cow in the meadow, and she took Tom along with her. There was a strong wind, so she tied Tom to a thistle with a piece of thread so that he wouldn't get blown away while she was milking the cow.

But soon the cow spied Tom's oak-leaf hat, which looked



good to her, so she took in Tom, the thistle, and the thread all in one mouthful. Tom cried out, “Mother! Mother!” as loud as he could, for he knew the cow’s teeth would chew him up any minute.

“Tom! Tom! Where are you?” his mother called.

“Here, in the cow’s mouth,” replied Tom.

Tom’s mother didn’t know what to do, so she just stood there wringing her hands and crying. When the cow heard the poor woman making such strange sounds, it opened its mouth, and Tom fell out. His mother caught him in her apron just in time, or he would have been badly hurt from the fall. She ran home with him and tried to comfort him.

Tom’s father made Tom a whip out of straw so that he could help drive the cattle, and one day as they were walking in the fields, a raven swooped down and snatched Tom up in his beak. Then the raven flew far out over the ocean and dropped him into the water. Almost at once a big fish gobbled up poor Tom. This fish was caught, and when it was

opened up in order to be cooked, out jumped Tom, feeling fine and glad to be free once again.

Everyone was amazed to see such a small boy. The people took Tom to the court of King Arthur, and soon he was the favorite of all the court.

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. How did Tom Thumb get his name?
2. What were his clothes made from?
3. Tell about Tom's adventure with the pudding batter.
4. How did Tom get out of the cow's mouth?
5. How did Tom get to King Arthur's court?

## The Horse and the Flea

*American Folk Rhyme*

A horse and a flea and three blind mice  
Sat on a curbstone shooting dice.  
The horse he slipped and fell on the flea.  
The flea said, "Whoops, there's a horse on me."



# The Adventures of Tom Thumb

## *Part Two*

The king and queen were much amused to see Tom's tricks. Sometimes when the king rode out on horseback, he took Tom with him. If it started to rain, Tom would crawl into the king's pocket and take a nap there until the rain was over.

One day King Arthur said, "Tell me, Tom, are your parents as small as you are?"

"No," said Tom, "they are as tall as anyone here in the court."

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### WORDS TO WATCH

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three-penny piece  
funeral

Knights of the  
Round Table

execution  
monument

“Do they live comfortably?” asked the king.

“They are rather poor,” said Tom.

When the king heard that, he took Tom to his treasure room and told him to take home to his parents all the money he could carry. Tom jumped with joy at this news. He went at once and got a purse made out of a water bubble. Then he returned to the treasure house and got a silver three-penny piece to put in the purse.

The purse was now almost too heavy for the little fellow to carry, but after travelling for two days and two nights and after resting twenty times, he finally reached home safely. He was tired to death, and his mother ran out to greet him and carried him into the house.

Tom rested and told his parents all the things that had happened to him since the raven had snatched him up from the field. Then he returned to King Arthur’s court.

By this time Tom’s clothes were so ragged and torn that the king ordered his servants to dress Tom like a knight. The king made Tom one of the Knights of his Round Table, and



his new name now was Sir Thomas. The king also ordered his servants to find Sir Thomas a mouse which he could use for a horse. Often Sir Thomas would go out hunting with the king and his other knights. Everyone was much amused to see Sir Thomas riding along on his fine mouse-horse.

But the queen did not like all the attention Sir Thomas was getting, and she decided to ruin him. She told the king that Sir Thomas was very rude to her.

The king sent for Sir Thomas at once, but Sir Thomas was afraid of the king's anger, and he hid in an empty snail shell. He lay there for a long time and almost starved to death, but at last he peeped out and saw a fine big butterfly nearby. He sneaked up on the butterfly, jumped on its back, and was soon carried high up into the air. The butterfly flew from tree to tree and from field to field until finally it flew into King Arthur's Court. All the knights and servants, and the king himself, tried to catch the butterfly. At last poor Sir Thomas fell off the butterfly and into a watering can, where he almost drowned.

When the queen saw him, she was very angry. She ordered him put into a mouse cage until the time for his execution. But it happened that a cat was walking by the cage, and it saw something alive inside. The cat tossed the cage about until the wires broke and Sir Thomas escaped.

Once more Tom became a favorite of the king. But then one day poor Tom came to an unhappy end. He was attacked

by a big black spider. Tom fought him well with his sword, but the spider's poisonous bite at last overcame him.

The king and all his knights and servants were very sad to see their favorite lying motionless on the grass.

The king ordered a big funeral for poor Tom and had a fine monument built to mark his grave. On the monument were these words:

Here lies Tom Thumb, King Arthur's knight,  
Who died by a spider's cruel bite.  
Wipe, wipe your eyes, and shake your head  
And cry—Alas! Tom Thumb is dead!

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#### QUESTIONS

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1. What did the king do when he heard that Tom's parents were poor?
2. Why was Tom's name changed to Sir Thomas?
3. Tell about Tom's adventure with the snail shell, the butterfly, and the cat.
4. What happened to Tom in the end?
5. What did the king do so that Tom would always be remembered?