Oral Reading Fluency

When I say “Begin,” start reading aloud at the top of the page (point). Read across the page (point). Try to read each word. If you come to a word you don’t know, I’ll tell it to you. Be sure to do your best reading. Ready, begin.

Aesop’s Fables

Aesop’s fables have long been used to teach children lessons about moral living. A fable is a form of story telling that usually features animals behaving like humans. The purpose of the fable is to teach a lesson about a human weakness or folly. To reinforce this lesson, fables usually include a moral at the end of the tale. In addition to teaching a lesson, fables offer a satirical look at human beings and their behaviors. A fable is closely related to allegory in that characters often have no individual personality, but embody certain stereotypical qualities. For example, a fox is sly or crafty; a crow is loud or brazen.

Notice that in this version of the fables, the animal’s names are capitalized. This convention is in keeping the notion that the animals are the principal characters.

The Hares and the Frogs

The Hares were so persecuted by the other beasts, they did not know where to go. As soon as they saw a single animal approach them, off they used to run. One day they saw a troop of wild Horses stampeding about, and in quite a panic all the Hares scuttled off to a lake near by, determined to drown themselves rather than live in such a continual state of fear. But just as they got near the bank of the lake, a troop of Frogs, frightened in their turn by the approach of the Hares scuttled off and jumped into the water. “Truly,” said one of the Hares, “things are not so bad as they seem.”

“The there is always someone worse off than yourself.”

The Shepherd Boy

Once a Shepherd Boy tended his sheep at the foot of a mountain near a forest. It was rather lonely for him all day, so he thought up a plan by which he could have company and some excitement. He ran towards the village calling out “Wolf, Wolf,” and the villagers came to meet him. Some stayed with him for a considerable time. This pleased the boy so much that a few days later he tried the same trick, and again the villagers came to help.
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The Study of Paleontology

Paleontology is the study of ancient and prehistoric life here on earth. Its purpose is to investigate plant and animal species evolution, as well as ancient ecosystems and the earth’s climate. Paleontology is a branch of geology which is the study of physical nature. It is also concerned with living things. Most people associate Paleontology with the study of Dinosaurs and fossils. Thanks to movies such as Jurassic Park; paleontology has a wide following. Paleontologists use the fossils of organisms to give them some idea of the conditions on earth during that organism’s lifetime. Changes in the fossils of particular species of organisms help answer questions about the evolution of the species. Most fossils are embedded in various types of rock formations; therefore paleontology is a ‘sub-science’ of geology and the two are closely related. Paleontologists not only get their information from looking at fossils, but also from their composition, placement and any surrounding preserved environment.

Paleontology is also very useful in the mining industry. It is critical to determine the age of geological formations. Paleontology helps because of its systematic approach to the dating of fossils. A paleontologist can determine the age of the rock, as opposed to the miner going solely on the rock’s physical properties.

Paleontology is invaluable in our understanding of the environment and climate cycles that naturally exist on earth, which contributes to our understanding of where we humans fit into the current environmental crisis. More importantly, the earth has gone through various cycles of warming and cooling; paleontology gives us insight as to how organisms responded; whether they adapted or perished. Although we humans blame ourselves for the ‘greenhouse effect,’ global warming and other environmental problems that we are experiencing; paleontology provides evidence that there were similar environmental happenings on our planet long before we had a chance to destroy the environment with our cars and other pollutants! This gives us invaluable insight into possible solutions to prevent or slow further damage. It also is at least an acknowledgement that the earth itself has cycles which need to be taken into consideration.