Informational Main Idea

Grade 3 Reading Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer.

READ THIS FIRST

The Busy Life of a Lighthouse Keeper

Long ago, lighthouses helped ships find their way at night. Each lighthouse needed a keeper. Lighthouse keepers worked hard every day and night to keep sailors safe.

The most important job was keeping the light burning. Before electric lights, lamps burned oil. Every evening, the keeper climbed the long, winding stairs to light the lamp. During the night, the keeper climbed up again and again to add oil and trim the wick.

The keeper also had to keep the glass clean. Smoke from the lamp left black marks on the windows and the big lens. A dirty lens made the light weak. So keepers polished the glass every single morning.

Bad weather made the work even harder. In thick fog, sailors could not see the light at all. Some lighthouses had a loud fog bell or horn. Keepers rang the bell for hours so ships could hear where the rocks were.

Keepers also wrote in a logbook each day. They wrote about the weather and the ships that passed. Some keepers even rowed out to help sailors in trouble.

Today, most lighthouses run on their own with electric lights. Few people live in them anymore. Still, we remember the keepers who once worked through long, lonely nights.

1. What is this text mostly about?
   - how lamps burned oil before electric lights
   - the many jobs keepers did to keep sailors safe
   - how sailors steered their ships through fog
   - why most lighthouses run on their own today

2. What is the main idea of paragraph 3?
   - Keepers lit the lamp every single evening.
   - The big lens was made of colored glass.
   - Keepers cleaned the glass so the light stayed strong.
   - Lamp smoke made the stairs dirty and black.

3. Which detail supports the idea that bad weather made the work harder?
   - Few people live in lighthouses today.
   - Keepers rang the fog bell for hours.
   - Keepers polished the glass each morning.
   - Keepers wrote about the passing ships.

4. Which sentence is true but too narrow to be the main idea of the whole text?
   - Smoke left black marks on the windows.
   - Keepers worked only during the summer.
   - Keepers slept through most of the night.
   - Lighthouse keepers had many hard jobs.

5. Which is the best summary of this text?
   - Keepers climbed the stairs many times each night to add oil and trim the wick.
   - Keepers rowed out every night to bring sailors safely into the harbor.
   - Keepers kept the lamp lit, cleaned the glass, rang fog bells, and kept records.
   - Lighthouses are tall towers by the sea, and most now use electric lights.

6. Which is the best title for this text?
   - Ships That Sailed Through Fog
   - Keeping Sailors Safe at Night
   - Trimming a Lamp Wick
   - Building a Tall Stone Tower

7. What is paragraph 2 mostly about?
   - ringing a loud bell in thick fog
   - keeping the lamp burning all night
   - writing about ships in a logbook
   - cleaning smoke off the big lens

8. Which detail tells another way some keepers helped sailors?
   - The stairs inside were long and winding.
   - Most lighthouses now use electric lights.
   - They rowed out to help sailors in trouble.
   - Smoke left black marks on the lens.

9. Which sentence is NOT a detail from this text?
   - Keepers added oil to the lamp at night.
   - Keepers painted the tower red each spring.
   - Some lighthouses had a loud fog horn.
   - Keepers wrote about the weather each day.

10. Why does the author tell about lighthouses today in the last paragraph?
    - to show how the keeper's job has changed
    - to explain how to clean a lens
    - to give keepers a new job to do
    - to describe ships that pass in fog

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Answer Key - Grade 3 Reading Worksheet

Circle the answer.

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Long ago, lighthouses helped ships find their way at night. Each lighthouse needed a keeper. Lighthouse keepers worked hard every day and night to keep sailors safe.

The most important job was keeping the light burning. Before electric lights, lamps burned oil. Every evening, the keeper climbed the long, winding stairs to light the lamp. During the night, the keeper climbed up again and again to add oil and trim the wick.

The keeper also had to keep the glass clean. Smoke from the lamp left black marks on the windows and the big lens. A dirty lens made the light weak. So keepers polished the glass every single morning.

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Keepers also wrote in a logbook each day. They wrote about the weather and the ships that passed. Some keepers even rowed out to help sailors in trouble.

Today, most lighthouses run on their own with electric lights. Few people live in them anymore. Still, we remember the keepers who once worked through long, lonely nights.

1. What is this text mostly about?
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   - **the many jobs keepers did to keep sailors safe**
   - how sailors steered their ships through fog
   - why most lighthouses run on their own today

2. What is the main idea of paragraph 3?
   - Keepers lit the lamp every single evening.
   - The big lens was made of colored glass.
   - **Keepers cleaned the glass so the light stayed strong.**
   - Lamp smoke made the stairs dirty and black.

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Keeping Sailors Safe at Night
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