Cite Evidence From the Text

Grade 4 Reading Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Read the text. Circle the detail that best shows or explains each idea.

READ THIS FIRST

Katherine Johnson Checks the Numbers

In 1962, astronaut John Glenn was about to become the first American to orbit Earth. NASA had new electronic computers to plan the flight. These machines could do thousands of calculations quickly. Still, Glenn asked for one more check. He wanted a mathematician named Katherine Johnson to work the numbers by hand. "If she says they're good," he reportedly said, "then I'm ready to go."

Johnson had loved numbers since she was a small child in West Virginia. She counted everything she saw, from steps on the road to dishes she washed. She was so far ahead in school that she was ready for high school at age ten. Her town had no high school for Black students, so her family moved to a town that did. She graduated from college at eighteen with degrees in math and French.

In 1953, Johnson joined a research center in Virginia that later became part of NASA. She worked with a group of women called "computers" because they computed numbers by hand. At first, Johnson and the other Black women in her group worked in a separate office. Women were also left out of important meetings. Johnson asked questions anyway. She wanted to know why the numbers mattered, not just what they were. Over time, engineers began to ask for her by name.

Johnson spent days checking the path of Glenn's capsule. She worked through long rows of figures with a pencil and a desk calculator. If one number was wrong, the capsule could come down far from the ships waiting to pick it up. Her answers matched the computer's. Glenn's flight circled Earth three times and returned safely.

Johnson went on to help plan the Apollo 11 trip to the Moon in 1969. She also worked on the space shuttle program. In 2015, at age ninety-seven, she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. A NASA building now carries her name.

Johnson often said she simply liked to work. Her careful checks helped give astronauts the confidence to fly.

1. Which detail best shows that Johnson's talent for math appeared early?

   She helped plan the Apollo 11 trip to the Moon.

   She joined the research center in Virginia in 1953.

   She was ready for high school by the age of ten.

   She often said she simply liked to work.

2. Which detail best shows that Johnson was careful?

- She graduated from college at eighteen with two degrees.
- The women in her group were called computers.
- She often said that she simply liked to work.
- She checked the capsule's path for days.

3. Which detail best shows that Johnson's family supported her schooling?

- Her family moved to a town that had a high school.
- She worked in a separate office at first.
- She counted everything she saw, from steps to dishes.
- She received the Medal of Freedom at age ninety-seven.

4. Which detail best shows that Glenn's flight went well?

- Glenn circled Earth three times and came back safely.
- Johnson worked through long rows of figures by hand.
- Johnson received the Medal of Freedom in 2015.
- NASA had new electronic computers to plan the flight.

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Answer Key - Grade 4 Reading Worksheet

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