How a Text Is Organized

Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

Name _____ Date _____

Read the text. Circle what each paragraph does.

READ THIS FIRST

Keeping Food Cold, Then and Now

Today, keeping food cold is as simple as opening a refrigerator door. Two hundred years ago, it took months of hard work. Both the old icehouse and the modern refrigerator solve the same problem. Heat makes food spoil, and cold slows that down. Yet the two inventions work in very different ways.

An icehouse stored winter ice so it could be used in summer. In January, when lakes and ponds froze thick, workers went out with saws. They cut the ice into large blocks, some weighing hundreds of pounds. Horses then pulled the blocks to the icehouse on sleds.

The icehouse itself was built to keep heat out. Many were partly underground, where the soil stays cool. The walls were thick, and the blocks were packed in sawdust or straw. These materials trapped air, which slowed the flow of heat toward the ice. A well-built icehouse could keep ice frozen until late summer. Families chipped off pieces and placed them in an icebox, a wooden cabinet lined with tin or zinc.

A refrigerator does not need any ice at all. Instead, it moves heat from inside the box to the outside. A special liquid flows through thin tubes inside the walls. As the liquid turns into a gas, it soaks up heat from the food. A pump called a compressor then squeezes the gas, and the heat is released through coils on the back. If you feel the back of a refrigerator, it is often warm. That warmth is heat taken from your food.

The two methods differ in what they depend on. An icehouse depended on the weather. A warm winter meant thin ice, and a hot summer meant the ice ran out early. A refrigerator depends on electricity instead. It keeps the same cold temperature in every season, as long as the power stays on.

They also differ in effort. Filling an icehouse took a crew of workers several days, and the ice slowly melted anyway. A refrigerator runs on its own, day and night.

Still, the two share an important idea. Neither one creates cold. The icehouse kept heat away from ice that winter had already made. The refrigerator pushes heat out of the box. In both cases, keeping food cold really means controlling heat.

Some old icehouses still stand today. A few have even become small museums where visitors can see how people kept food fresh long ago.

1. What does the first paragraph do?

   It names one problem that two inventions solve.

   It lists the steps for cutting ice in January.

   It explains how a compressor squeezes the gas.

   It describes museums that keep old icehouses open.

2. What does the second paragraph do?

   It compares the cost of ice with electricity.

   It tells how winter ice was cut and hauled.

   It explains how a refrigerator moves heat out.

   It tells how old icehouses became museums.

3. What does the fourth paragraph do?

   It shows why a warm winter was a big problem.

   It describes how the icehouse walls were built.

   It explains how a refrigerator works without ice.

   It says what the two methods have in common.

4. What does the last paragraph do?

   It compares the effort of the two methods.

   It repeats that both methods control heat.

   It tells how workers cut ice in January.

   It adds that some old icehouses still stand.

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Answer Key - Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

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