How a Text Is Organized

Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

Name _____ Date _____

Read the text. Circle the answer to each Why question.

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. The first paragraph names a problem: heat makes food spoil. Why is the text still mainly compare and contrast?

   - Most paragraphs show how two answers to that problem are alike and different.
   - The paragraphs tell the history of food in time order.
   - The problem is never solved anywhere in the text.
   - The text gives only one solution and describes it.

2. The second paragraph uses time order. Why does the author use it there?

   - to show the steps of harvesting ice for the icehouse
   - to show when the refrigerator was invented
   - to compare ice with electricity
   - to explain why food spoils

3. Why would a warm winter be a problem for a family that used an icehouse?

   - Their refrigerator would stop working without power.
   - Horses could not pull sleds over thick ice.
   - Thin ice meant there might not be enough to last the summer.
   - The sawdust would trap too much air around the ice.

4. Why does the author place the paragraph that begins “Still, the two share” after the differences?

   - to show that refrigerators were invented first
   - to argue that icehouses worked better than refrigerators
   - to list the steps for building a new icehouse
   - to show that, despite their differences, both rest on the same idea

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Answer Key - Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

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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.

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- [x] to show that, despite their differences, both rest on the same idea