



acadience® reading survey

Student Materials

Oral Reading Fluency / Level 4

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Tea Around the World

► According to a Chinese legend, an emperor was drinking a cup of warm water when the wind blew some leaves into it. The emperor didn't want to waste the water, so he continued to drink. He was delighted by the flavor as he drank the world's first cup of tea. Soon, people all over China were enjoying the new drink.

Whether or not the story is true, one thing is certain: tea got its start in China. The Chinese have been drinking it for more than five thousand years. Over time, people who traveled from China to other places introduced tea to the rest of the world.

Many countries have their own customs for serving tea. In ceremonies in China, tea is brewed in several different ways. People take time to sip and enjoy the delicate flavor of each brew. The Japanese hold tea ceremonies, too. They prepare and serve tea in a beautiful setting to help people calm their minds and meditate.

In Morocco, people burn incense while they drink tea. They brew their tea with mint and sugar in silver teapots and serve it in small glasses. The teapot is held high above the glasses while pouring so a bubbly foam will form in each glass.

Russians make tea in an invention called a "samovar." It has a teapot on top of a tall chimney that is placed over a fire. They brew very strong tea and fill each cup only halfway. Then they add enough plain hot water to fill the cup.

In India, street vendors sell tea with buffalo milk and sugar. Sometimes they add cinnamon and sweet spices, too. Many people also enjoy having afternoon tea in elegant hotel tea rooms.

In England, people like to drink tea any time of the day. Most families gather for afternoon tea on weekends, and hotels serve afternoon tea all week. Afternoon tea is often served with little sandwiches and dainty desserts.

No matter how or where tea is served, it has the same effect. Tea makes people take time to relax and enjoy a cup together!

Performing Magic

► Have you ever watched a magic show and wished you knew the magician's secrets? Maybe you'd like to do magic tricks yourself.

Watching experts do magic is the best way to learn. You can study the tricks they do, as well as how they keep people fooled and fascinated.

There are hundreds of magic tricks, but many are similar. For example, many are vanishing acts. The object used in the trick may be a bird or a flower or another object, but it is always covered by a scarf and then disappears. Another common trick is the reverse of a vanishing act. A cloth is spread over an empty table or the magician's empty hand. Then it is lifted to reveal something that has appeared out of thin air. You may think the object comes from a secret compartment in the table or the magician's sleeve. Still, if you don't see it happen, you can never say for sure!

The magic "fix" is another popular trick. In this act, it seems that the magician breaks something and then magically puts it back together. Often it is a watch or other item that the performer takes from someone in the audience. This holds people's interest because they want to see whether the volunteer will get the item back.

Magic transport tricks are more advanced tricks. In these acts, the magician's assistant disappears from the stage and pops up somewhere else. She may appear at the back of the theater or on a platform high above the stage. A good magician performs the trick without giving any clues about how it's done. Even if you're sure there's a trick involved, you can't quite say what it is!

Books and videos can teach you many easy magic tricks. You can only learn the best tricks from real magicians, though. They reveal what they know only to skilled performers. With practice, you might learn to do basic tricks well enough to prove that you're serious. Then maybe you will learn the magicians' best-kept secrets!

A Pen Pal Surprise

▶ Just before winter break, the fourth-graders sent cardboard cutouts of themselves to their pen pals. Kate had worked hard on hers and was pleased that Cardboard Kate looked so much like her. She mailed the cutout and a letter to the Bahamas and waited eagerly for Martin to answer.

A few days later, Martin received Cardboard Kate in the mail. He read Kate's letter asking him to take her on a tour of his life. Martin was so excited that he went right outside and photographed Cardboard Kate in front of his house and all around the neighborhood. That evening, his mother cooked his favorite meal of spicy stewed fish. Martin taped a plastic fork to Cardboard Kate's hand and stood her next to the food. He got some great pictures of the cutout eating supper with his family.

The next day, Martin's family went to a big parade. Lively bands filled the streets. Dancers moved to the rhythm in dazzling costumes made of jewels and crepe paper. One dancer wore a headdress that towered six feet above his head! Martin asked him to hold Cardboard Kate. The dancer held the cutout up high while Martin took a photograph. Then Martin handed the cutout to a man playing a drum made from a big metal barrel. The drummer held Cardboard Kate next to his face with one hand and pounded his drum with the other. Everyone laughed at the wild-eyed face he made as Martin snapped the picture. As everyone danced and sang, Martin took pictures of Cardboard Kate celebrating right along with them.

A week later, the mail carrier delivered a package to Kate. Inside she found a scrapbook filled with Martin's pictures. She laughed out loud at the funny captions he had written telling what Cardboard Kate was seeing and doing. It made her feel as if she had been to the Bahamas herself. Kate wondered how she could thank her pen pal. As she turned the last page, something fell out of the book. It was Cardboard Martin! Kate knew just what to do.
