

### The Desert Monster

Word Count: 187

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Fluency Passage—Fiction

### The Desert Monster



LEVEL  
**R**

Third Grade

9 Casey woke up with a start. "What's that noise?"

21 Jonica rubbed her eyes and sat up in the tent. "What noise?"

32 she asked. Then, she heard it, too. They grabbed a flashlight

44 and climbed out of the tent, careful not to wake their parents.

46 "The desert is home to all sorts of creatures," said Casey.

62 "I sure hope we don't find one."

70 "You're letting your imagination run wild," Jonica replied,

81 clinging to Casey's shirt. They crept along the path near the

90 campsite. Whooo! Casey aimed the flashlight at the sound.

100 "Look!" yelled Jonica. "It's a monster with two huge arms!

111 It has gigantic eyes and a mouth!" The girls dashed back

123 to the tent and hid under the covers. When day broke, they

132 cautiously climbed out of the tent. "Maybe the monster's

135 gone," said Jonica.

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They walked along the path. Then Casey let out a loud laugh. The girls stood before a huge saguaro cactus. Its branches looked like arms.

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Three woodpecker holes formed two eyes and a mouth. Inside the “mouth” was a tiny owl. “Look at our desert monster now!” said Casey with a laugh.

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<b>Goal Rate</b>
112

	Read 1	Read 2	Read 3	Read 4	Read 5	Read 6
<b>WPM</b>						
<b>Errors</b>						
<b>WCPM</b>						
<b>Accuracy / Reading Rate %</b>						

Words Per Minute (WPM); WPM – Errors = Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM); (WCPM ÷ WPM) x 100 = Accuracy/Reading Rate %

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## Molly's New Friend

Molly and her mom were busy canning the vegetables  
 9 they had grown in the garden. These preserved foods would  
 19 take them through the long winter. The days were getting  
 29 shorter, so Molly knew that colder weather was on its way.  
 40 Suddenly, Molly heard an unfamiliar noise outside the  
 48 window. Her curiosity got the best of her. She put down her  
 60 spoon and went to explore. It took her no time to discover  
 72 a fluffy duckling.  
 75 It seemed to have a broken wing. Molly knew the injured  
 86 animal needed help. It would not survive the winter with a  
 97 broken wing. As she scooped up the duckling, it flapped its  
 108 one good wing against her hands, trying to gain its freedom.  
 119 "You may want to escape now," Molly said gently, "but  
 129 you'll be glad to have that wing fixed when the cold winter  
 141 comes!" Molly helped the duckling and then returned to  
 150 canning the vegetables.  
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Fluency Passage—Fiction **Molly's New Friend**



Prairie Dog Town

Prairie dogs are not what their name might suggest. While it's true that prairie dogs live on the prairie, they are not dogs at all. Prairie dogs are really ground squirrels, members of the rodent family. Prairie dogs are commonly found in the western parts of the United States and Mexico. They got the name "dogs" because they make small barking sounds to warn each other of danger. Prairie dogs are social animals that prefer to live in large groups or *towns*. They are good at digging holes and live in burrows. Prairie dogs search for food in the day and return to their burrows to sleep at night. They mostly eat grass, seeds, leaves, flowers, and fruit. Sometimes prairie dogs eat insects as well.

Many prairie animals like to hunt prairie dogs. What does a prairie dog do when a wolf, fox, or bobcat sneaks up on it, ready to pounce? *Zip!* The prairie dog scrambles into its burrow.

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## A Friend of the Rainforest

11 Did you know that much of the air you are breathing  
 20 right now comes from rainforests? Jeff Corwin learned this  
 31 important fact in grade school. Since then, his goal has been  
 41 to spread the word about the importance of rainforests. He  
 51 also teaches people about the animals that live in them.  
 59 Why are these animals important? Rainforests are home  
 71 to half of the animal groups in the world. All of these  
 81 animals are necessary for the health of the forest. Many  
 93 of them can't live anywhere else. Each one plays a role in  
 100 keeping the rainforest healthy and in balance.  
 108 Jeff wants to help people understand this important  
 117 information. He has started clubs for young people. The  
 127 clubs teach ways to help protect the rainforests. Jeff believes  
 137 education is the best way to preserve rainforests for future  
 145 generations. When people learn about rainforests, they will  
 150 want to help save them.

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**Monkeying Around**

10 Have you ever watched monkeys at the zoo? We are  
 21 fascinated by the way monkeys act. We laugh at how we  
 32 act like them when we get caught monkeying around. It is  
 44 funny to see just how much alike we and these primates are.  
 54 Humans are primates too! That means that we both belong  
 66 to the same group of animals. We have four fingers and an  
 75 opposable thumb. This means that the thumb sits across  
 85 from and bends toward the fingers. Our fingers and thumbs  
 94 can move independently or all together. This makes doing  
 107 daily activities easier than if we had paws like a cat or dog.  
 118 One thing we don't have in common is a tail. Some  
 128 monkeys have a prehensile tail. They can use it almost  
 139 like another hand to hold on to objects like tree limbs.  
 148 That is how they move from tree to tree.  
 155 The monkey can exhibit many human mannerisms  
 165 and actions. It is no wonder humans have so much  
 173 fun watching, playing, and training our little friends.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Word Count: 172

### The End of the Year

11 All around the world, people find time in their lives to  
18 celebrate special occasions. Holidays based on traditions  
22 help bind people together.  
33 December is a time of **merriment**. It is a month full  
42 of holidays. Families celebrate their **faith** in many ways.  
52 **Ornaments** are often a part of the celebration. They may  
61 be bought in a store or made by hand.  
73 Food is also a focus. To get ready for the holiday feast,  
85 some people **fast**. This means that they do not eat for a  
95 period of time leading up to the celebration. This makes  
101 the feast all the more special.  
111 December is also the end of the calendar year. Many  
120 people make **New Year's resolutions**. A resolution is like  
131 a promise of something you will try to do. Maybe you  
143 will try to be healthier. Maybe you will try to be more

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**generous** with your time or money. The idea is to try to 155  
 make life better for yourself or for those around you. 165  
 What will your New Year’s resolution be? 172

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### Jeremy Makes It Rain

9 Jeremy worked on his science project. The focus was Earth's atmosphere.

19 "What're you doing?" asked his little brother, Jim.

27 "I'm making rain," Jeremy explained. "You can help."

32 Jeremy got an old aquarium.

41 "When the Sun heats water, it becomes invisible vapor

53 and rises up and becomes clouds. It's as if it gets absorbed

64 into the air. When vapor cools, it gets heavy and falls.

74 That is called precipitation. We'll put an inch of water

83 into the bottom of the tank for our ocean."

95 Next they covered the top with a piece of plastic wrap. Then

108 they put the aquarium in a sunny spot in the yard. "Now we

118 have to wait for the temperature to rise," he explained.

127 They waited. Soon steam formed on the glass walls.

135 Drops of water slid down in some places.

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“Hey!” Jim yelled. “It IS raining! Look, Jeremy!” 143

Sure enough, drops were forming on the bottom of the 153

plastic and dripped into the “little ocean” below. Suddenly, 162

Jim slapped the side of the tank. 169

“What’d you do THAT for?” huffed Jeremy. 176

“YOU made it rain. I made it thunder!” Jim laughed. 186

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### Making a Gift for Mom

Tammy decided to make her mother a birthday gift. Her goal was to use recycled materials, and she had magazines and milk cartons to work with. She picked up a milk carton and studied it closely. "I could use this to make a vase," she thought. "I could cut off the top and paint it yellow to match our kitchen." She decided that the project would require about an hour to complete.

She began looking through a magazine. "What could I create using these colorful ads?" she wondered. Suddenly, she had a great idea. First, she would look at the details on each page and tear out ads with red and purple colors, separating the pages by color. Then she would cut triangles from them to use for beads. She would roll the triangles tightly around a pencil, slip them off, and glue them closed. Finally, she would string the beads to make a brightly colored bracelet. Tammy thought her mother would like it

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better than the vase. However, she was concerned because 173  
 she knew the bracelet would take more time than the vase 184  
 to finish. 186

Looking at her watch, Tammy said, “Fortunately, I have 195  
 enough time.” However, she wasted no time before gathering 204  
 all the materials that she needed and starting on the work 215  
 for her mother’s special gift. 220

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### Recycling Jars and Cans

Have you ever thought about what happens to jars and cans after you discard them into the recycling bin? Well, it depends on the materials present in each item.

40 First, take a look at glass. Glass is made from several

48 materials, including soda ash, sand, and lime. Similar

59 to many other products, glass does not break down in a

68 landfill. That's why it's important to recycle it whenever

69 possible.

79 When glass is recycled, it is first separated by color.

90 Then a machine crushes it into small pieces and the pieces

102 are melted down into a liquid. This hot liquid can then be

108 used to mold new glass jars.

118 Now take a look at aluminum. This material comes from

130 an ore that is mined below the ground. It takes a great

140 amount of energy to produce it. However, this energy can

146 be saved if aluminum is recycled.

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If you have ever used pressure to crush a soda can, you 158  
 know that aluminum is soft. Yet, similar to glass, it will 169  
 not break down in a landfill, providing another reason 178  
 to recycle aluminum. When it is recycled, it is melted and 189  
 then manufactured into new cans and other objects. 197

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