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## Introduction

*That night, David's mother served the snake for dinner. She served it creamed on toast. There was a guest for dinner the night the rattlesnake was served.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*"We've come for dinosaur! Alejandro said we could eat some dinosaur on his birthday!" Alejandro's mother started to explain that dinosaurs were extinct, but then Thomas came in. He was carrying a dinosaur!*

If a student read either one of these statements out of context, the student might have a difficult time knowing which statement is fiction and which one is nonfiction. In addition, the student would have no idea how the two statements could be tied together or used to support an argument or idea.

If, on the other hand, the student read these statements in context and understood how they fit into an entire passage, the student would be able to answer with confidence that, as strange as it may seem, David grew up in a time and a place where poisonous snakes were a valuable food source. The student would then be able to compare, contrast, or tie this fact to the passage about a fictitious child who has insisted that he be served dinosaur or nothing at all for his birthday, and whose brother has found a solution to this unreasonable request by making a dinosaur-shaped cake. (Both passages deal with eating something one would not expect to eat.)

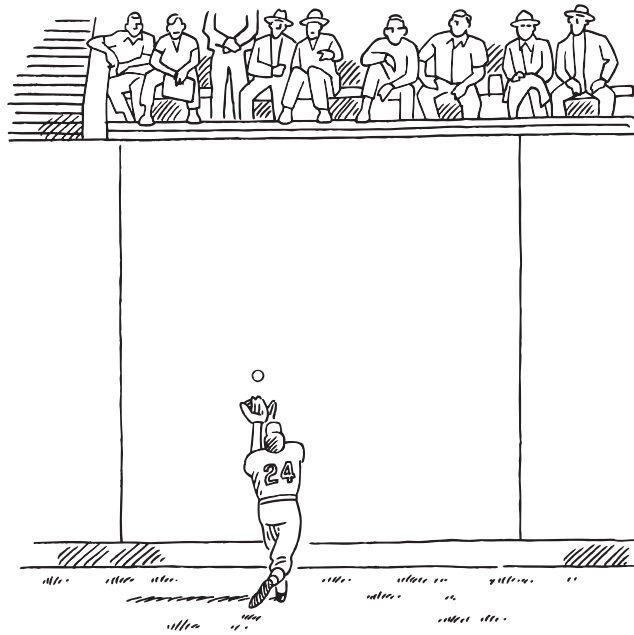
# An Impossible Catch

In the eighth inning of Game 1 of the 1954 World Series, the score was tied 2-2. The New York Giants were in the field, and the Cleveland Indians were at bat. With two men already on base, the Indian's Vic Wertz hit a fly ball deep into center field. As it soared through the air, no one thought the ball could be caught. It seemed to be going too far too fast, so the Indians would score and take the lead in the game.

One man sprang into action. Turning his back on the infield, the centerfielder ran toward the outfield fence as fast as he could. He ran toward the deepest part of center field—nearly 440 feet (134 meters) from home plate—before he took a quick glance back, raised his mitt, and caught the ball as it was flying over his shoulder!

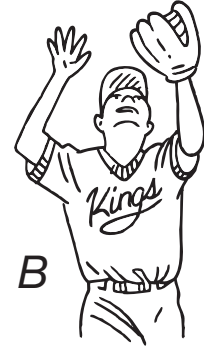
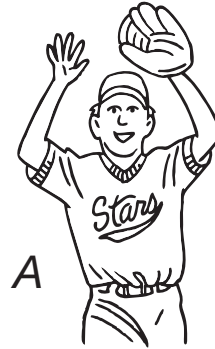
As soon as he had caught the ball, the man spun around and threw the ball into the infield. His actions were so quick that the runners on base never had a chance to score! The Giants won the World Series that year. Many people say it was due to the play now known simply as “The Catch.”

Who was this player who made the impossible catch? He was Willie Mays. Willie played baseball for 22 seasons. In his first six games in the major leagues, he had only 1 hit after 26 times at bat! Good thing he didn't give up, because by the end of his career, Willie had a total of 3,283 hits. He also scored 2,062 runs and hit 660 home runs.



# Show What You Know (cont.)

6. Circle the player that shows the position Willie Mays was in when he made “An Impossible Catch.”



7. List in order what happens in the story. Use the numbers 1 to 5. Put “1” by what happened first. Put “5” by what happened last.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Andrew tells a joke.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. McCormick tells a joke.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. McCormick talks about Willie Mays’s attitude.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. McCormick says that it is time for math.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. McCormick talks about Willie Mays’ nickname.

Write three or more sentences that tell what each story is about.

8. “An Impossible Catch”

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9. “The Right Attitude”

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10. Do you think one person’s attitude can change how other people feel? Write one paragraph or more telling why you think so. You may choose to use an example from your own life or someone else’s life if you want. *(Use a separate piece of paper.)*