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# Common Core State Standards

The lessons and activities included in *Nonfiction Reading Comprehension for the Common Core, Grade 7* meet the following Common Core State Standards. (©Copyright 2010. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers. All rights reserved.) For more information about the Common Core State Standards, go to <http://www.corestandards.org/> or visit <http://www.teachercreated.com/standards/>.

Informational Text Standards	
Craft and Structure	Pages
<b>CCSS.ELA.RI.7.4.</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.	10–47
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity	Pages
<b>CCSS.ELA.RI.7.10.</b> By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	10–47
Language Standards	
Conventions of Standard English	Pages
<b>CCSS.ELA.L.7.1.</b> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	11–47
<b>CCSS.ELA.L.7.2.</b> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	11–47
Knowledge of Language	Pages
<b>CCSS.ELA.L.7.3.</b> Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.	10–47
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	Pages
<b>CCSS.ELA.L.7.4.</b> Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 7 reading and content</i> , choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.	10–47
<b>CCSS.ELA.L.7.5.</b> Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.	10–47
<b>CCSS.ELA.L.7.6.</b> Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	10–47
Writing Standards	
Production and Distribution of Writing	Pages
<b>CCSS.ELA.W.7.4.</b> Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	10–47
Research to Build and Present Knowledge	Pages
<b>CCSS.ELA.W.7.9.</b> Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	10–47

# The First Passengers

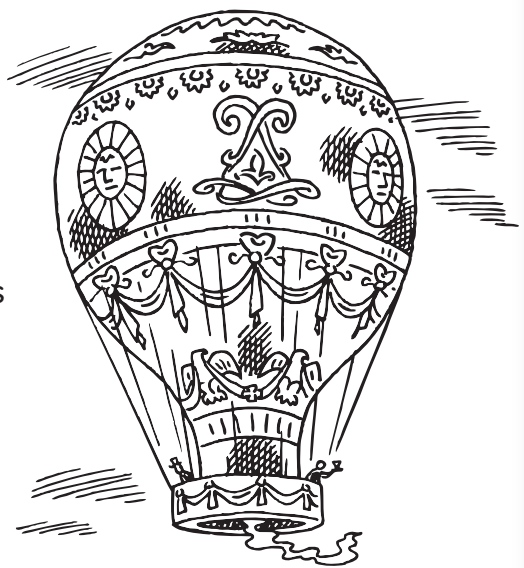
About 130,000 spectators, including King Louis XVI, looked up into the sky above France and saw a large balloon soaring overhead. The balloon was filled with hot air. It had a basket attached to the bottom of it. The basket held the first passengers ever to fly in a hot-air balloon. The day was September 19, 1783. After eight minutes and two miles of flight, the balloon landed. All of the passengers got off safely. Who were the passengers? They were a sheep, a duck, and a rooster.

Only a year before, two men filled a silk and paper bag with hot air and watched as it rose up to the ceiling of a house. Since the hot air was less dense than the air around it, it could rise. These men, who were brothers, started experimenting with bigger and bigger bags. It was they who, under advice from the king, launched the farm animals into the sky on that September day in 1783.

The early balloon looked a little different than the hot-air balloons do of today. For one thing, it was highly decorated to impress the French royalty in the crowd.

Only two months later, the first humans flew in a hot-air balloon. It took a lot of bravery because it was still a very young science. The first man to fly in a balloon was a chemistry and physics teacher. He just went straight up and then straight back down. Why? His balloon was tethered to the ground with a rope. Soon, another man tried an untethered flight. He landed his balloon about five miles away from his starting point. From that point on, people began flying further and further.

Jean-Pierre Blanchard was another pioneer in the history of balloon flight. Not only that, he was also the first to use another important invention. When faced with an emergency situation, Blanchard used a parachute to successfully jump out of a balloon in mid-flight.



Answer the following questions about the story “The First Passengers.” The weights show you how hard you will need to work to find each answer.



1. What was the occupation of the first man to fly in a balloon?

- Ⓐ king Ⓒ inventor  
Ⓑ teacher Ⓓ passenger



2. What made the first balloon rise?

- Ⓐ hot air Ⓒ ice  
Ⓑ cold air Ⓓ silk



3. The title of the passage is “The First Passengers.” To whom does this title refer?

- Ⓐ King Louis XVI Ⓒ French royalty  
Ⓑ Jean-Pierre Blanchard Ⓓ three animals



4. Based on the passage, what does the word *tethered* mean?

- Ⓐ let go Ⓒ tied to  
Ⓑ cut off Ⓓ blown away

On the lines below, write your own question based on “The First Passengers.” Circle the correct picture on the left to show the level of the question you wrote.



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**On a separate piece of paper . . .**

- Write a sentence that includes the word *invention*.
  - The first balloon that flew for the king had symbols on it that represented him. If you were designing a balloon, what symbols would you put on it to represent you? Draw your balloon, complete with symbols on the bag.
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## A Remarkable Find

For years after they were discovered, archeologists and scientists couldn't figure out what all those pictures on the Egyptian tombs and artwork meant. They couldn't understand the artifacts they found from the ancient Egyptian culture. The symbols on the walls and tombs and vases clearly represented a language, but nobody knew what that language was saying. Until one day, in 1799, a French soldier unearthed what became known as the Rosetta Stone.

The Rosetta Stone was a remarkable find. It was a *stèle*, a stone slab, on which was carved a single piece of text. What makes the stone so scientifically valuable is that this piece of text is written in three different languages. This was the breakthrough that scientists needed. Knowing what the authors were trying to say, and being able to compare known words with three ancient languages, helped to break the code that became known as the ancient hieroglyphic language. The way it works is this:

Imagine you have a document in a language you understand. Maybe it's a simple letter that starts with "*Dear Peter, please come home for dinner.*" Then, you find that same line written in three different languages.

*Spanish: Querido Peter, por favor vuelve a casa para la cena.*

*French: Cher Peter, s'il vous plaît revenir à la maison pour le dîner.*

*Italian: Caro Peter, ti aspettiamo a casa per cena.*

From looking at all three languages and knowing what the original document said, you can figure out, for example, that "Cher" in French means "Dear" in English. The Rosetta Stone worked much the same way.

Since then, the term "Rosetta Stone" has become an idiom in the English language. An idiom is an expression used to describe something in a culture. In this case, the term "Rosetta Stone" is used to describe the clue that is used to solve a mystery.



Answer the following questions about the story “A Remarkable Find.” The weights show you how hard you will need to work to find each answer.



1. Based on what you learned from the passage, what is the Italian word for “Dear?”

Ⓐ *Claro*

Ⓒ *Caro*

Ⓑ *Cher*

Ⓓ *Carus*



2. Which of the following is not an example of an idiom?

Ⓐ He is pulling my leg!

Ⓑ You should keep an eye out for the lost book.

Ⓒ You seem to have a chip on your shoulder.

Ⓓ This is a fantastic book!



3. According to the passage, what is a *stèle*?

Ⓐ a sliver of rock

Ⓒ a piece of pottery

Ⓑ a big chunk of stone

Ⓓ a tomb



4. How many languages were found carved into the Rosetta Stone?

Ⓐ 2

Ⓒ 4

Ⓑ 3

Ⓓ 5

On the lines below, write your own question based on “A Remarkable Find.” Circle the correct picture on the left to show the level of the question you wrote.




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**On a separate piece of paper . . .**

- Write a sentence that includes the word *ancient*.
  - Are you bilingual? Do you know more than one language? If you do, what are the similarities between English and your other spoken language(s)?
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