



Grade 5 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Read the short story. Then answer each question.

I Will Think About It

"I will think about it." It is easy to say this, but do you know what great things have come from thinking? We cannot see our thoughts, or hear, or taste, or feel them, and yet what mighty power our thoughts have!

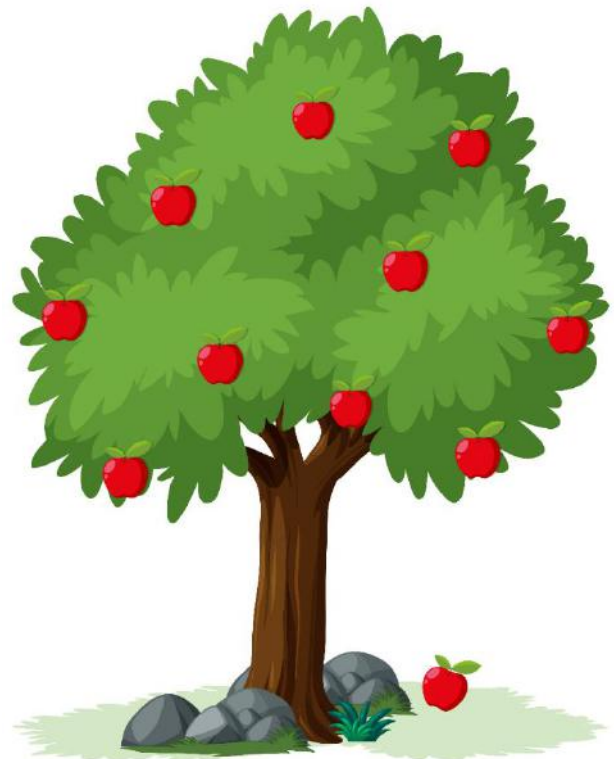
Sir Isaac Newton was seated in his garden on a summer's evening when he saw an apple fall from a tree. He began to think, and, in trying to find out why the apple fell, discovered how the earth, sun, moon, and stars are kept in their places.

A boy named James Watt sat quietly by the fireside watching the lid of the tea kettle as it moved up and down. He began to think; he wanted to find out why the steam in the kettle moved the heavy lid. From that time, he went on thinking and thinking, and when he became a man, he improved the steam engine so much that it could do the work of many horses with the greatest ease.

When you see a steamboat, a steam mill or a locomotive, remember that it would never have been built if it had not been for the hard thinking of someone.

A man named Galileo was once standing in the cathedral of Pisa when he saw a chandelier swaying to and fro. This set him thinking, and it led to the invention of the pendulum.

James Ferguson was a poor Scottish shepherd boy. Once, seeing the inside of a watch, he was filled with wonder.



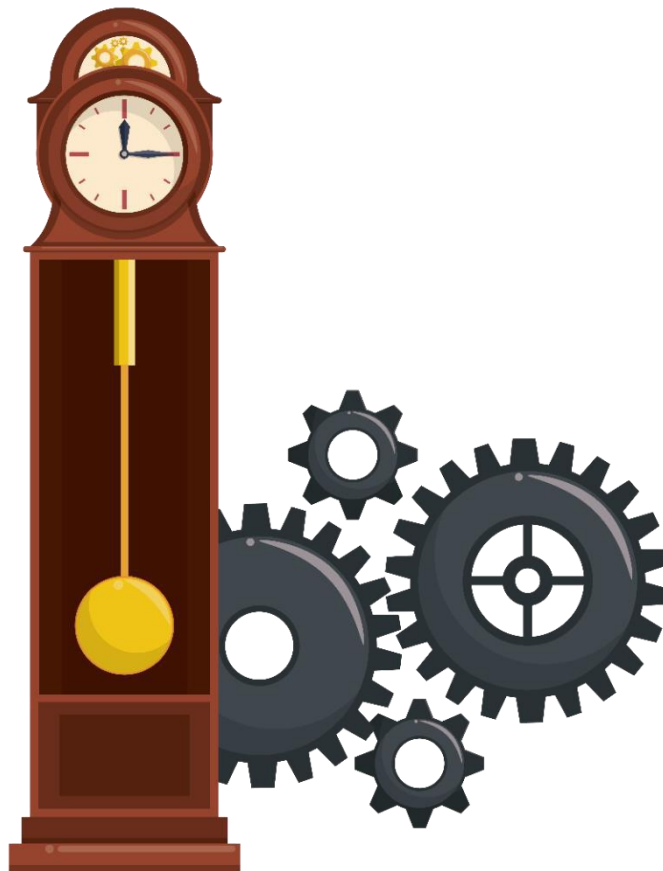


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"I should make a watch," he thought. But how was he to get the materials to make the wheels and the mainspring? He soon found out how to get them. He made the mainspring out of a piece of whalebone. He then made a wooden clock which kept good time. He began, also, to copy pictures with a pen and portraits with oil colors.

In a few years, while still a small boy, he earned enough money to support his father. When he became a man, he went to London to live. Some of the wisest men in England, and the king himself, used to attend his lectures. His motto was, "I will think of it," and he made his thoughts useful to himself and the world.

When you have a difficult lesson to learn, don't feel discouraged, and ask someone to help you before helping yourselves. By thinking you will learn how to think to some purpose.





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Questions:

1. Which best describes James Ferguson?
 - a. rich
 - b. gives up easily
 - c. clumsy
 - d. curious

2. What is the short story trying to teach you?
 - a. Thoughts are not important since we can see or touch them.
 - b. It is important to try a challenge on your own.
 - c. Ask for help right away when things get hard.
 - d. Great people have great teachers.

3. Which idea from the short story is an opinion?
 - a. Isaac Newton discovered how the earth, sun, moon, and stars are kept in their places.
 - b. It is easy to say, "I will think about this."
 - c. The king attended the lectures of James Ferguson.
 - d. James Watt improved the steam engine.

4. How do you think the author feels about the people he describes?
 - a. bored
 - b. sad
 - c. confused
 - d. impressed



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Answers:

1. Which best describes James Ferguson?
d. curious
2. What is the short story trying to teach you?
b. It is important to try a challenge on your own.
3. Which idea from the short story is an opinion?
b. It is easy to say, "I will think about this."
4. How do you think the author feels about the people he describes?
d. impressed