

STUDENT NAME _____



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

GRADE 4
Reading Language Arts
STAAR Alternate 2

Administered Spring 2025
RELEASED

READING LANGUAGE ARTS

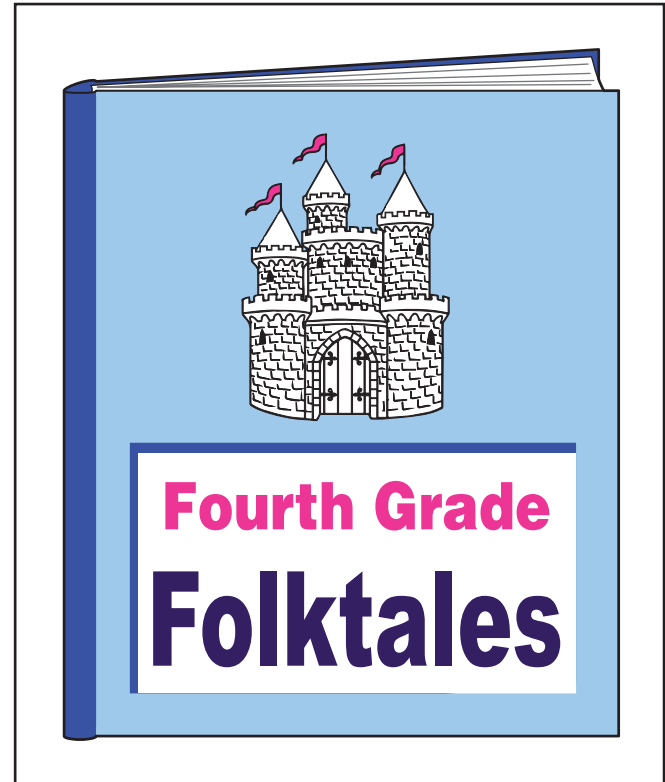
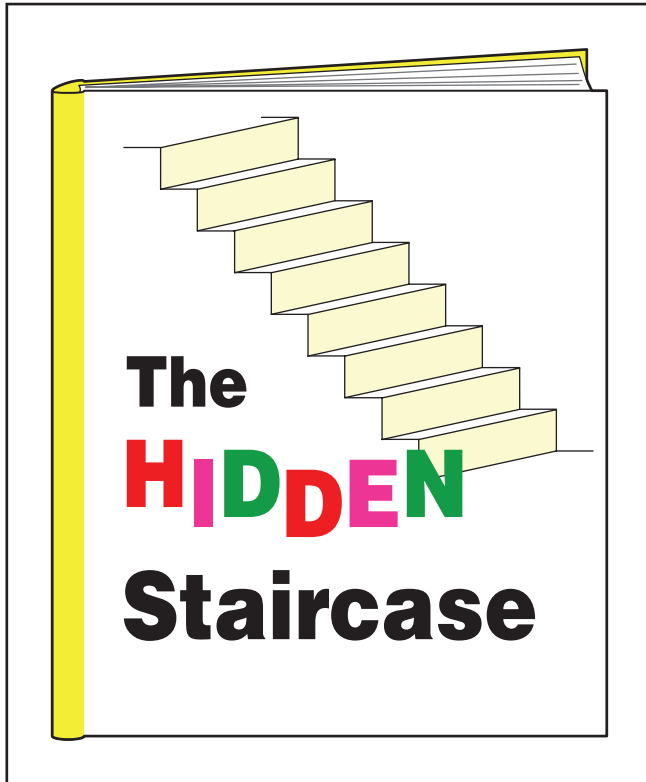
Mystery Solved

Charlie reads every mystery book in the school library. He loves solving mysteries in stories and in real life.



When there is a mystery to be solved, students and teachers often ask Charlie. One day Ms. Edwards, the school librarian, asks Charlie to help her solve a mystery. The library book *The Hidden Staircase* is missing, and she needs his help to find it.





3a



Ms. Edwards says, "Our copy of *The Hidden Staircase* has vanished. I can't find it anywhere!"

"That's the second book in the series by that author. A lot of kids are waiting to read that book. Let's start looking for clues by remembering what you did," Charlie says. "When did you discover that the book was missing?"

Ms. Edwards says, "I could not find the book when I got to school this morning."

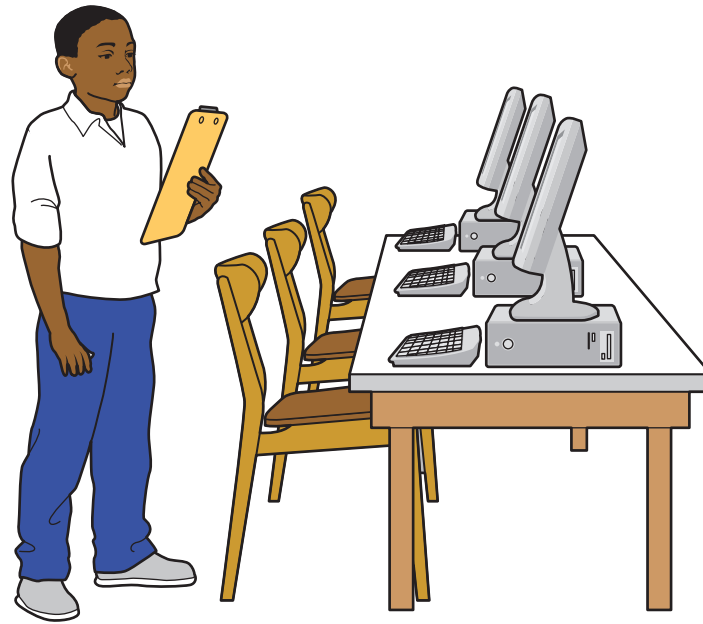
"So the last time you saw the book was yesterday afternoon?" Charlie asks.

"Yes. I was about to reshelve it, but I needed to turn off all the computers before I left." Ms. Edwards points to the computer tables.

"I think we just found our first clue," Charlie says. He picks up a clipboard that is next to a computer. "Is this yours?" he asks.

"Yes! I was taking notes about what needed to be done before the book fair. I remember putting the book on top of the clipboard while I was carrying it around," Ms. Edwards says.

3a



disappointed

discovered

disappeared

"Do you remember why you put the clipboard down by the computer?"
Charlie asks.



"Oh yes," Ms. Edwards says. She remembers that Mrs. Jacobs had come into the library to get books for her science class. "I set the clipboard down so that I could help Mrs. Jacobs carry the books, and then Mrs. Jacobs asked to see the book. That's another clue!"

"Do you think Mrs. Jacobs took the missing book with her?" Charlie asks.

"No. I remember her giving it back to me. Then we walked over to the bulletin board to check the dates for the book fair."

Charlie and Ms. Edwards walk over to the bulletin board and find the book fair flyer on the floor.



"Oh, this happened yesterday too." Ms. Edwards is annoyed. "This flyer keeps falling down."

"Did you pin it back up yesterday?" asks Charlie.

"Yes. I'm sure I did," Ms. Edwards says. "Why?"

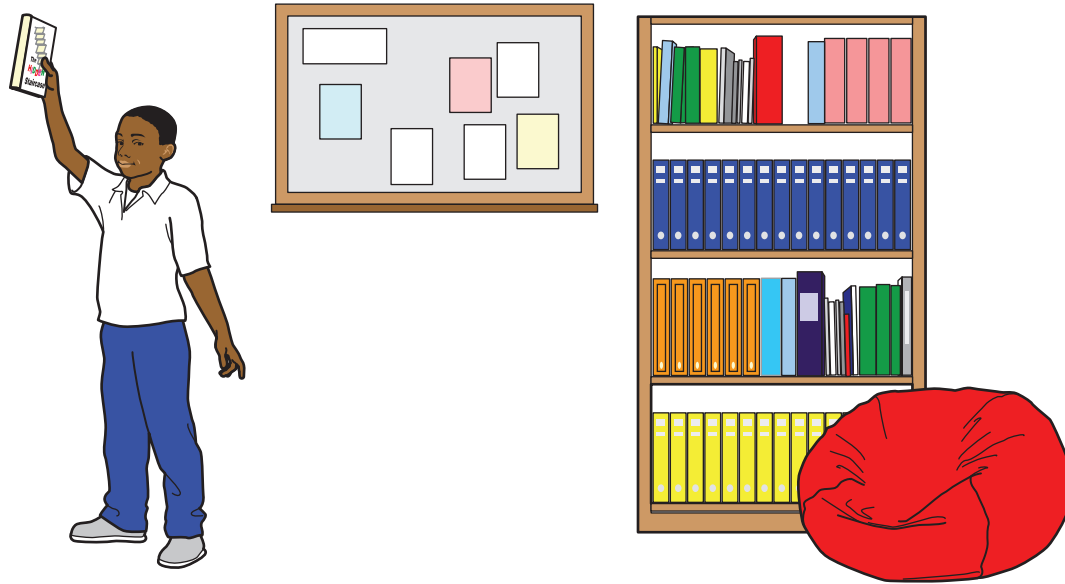
Charlie smiles. "What did you do with the book while you pinned the flyer back on the bulletin board?"

Ms. Edwards says, "I had to set the book down and use two hands to pin the flyer."

"Exactly!" Charlie says. "Maybe the missing book is somewhere around this bulletin board."

Charlie looks down and sees something under a beanbag chair that looks like the corner of the missing book.

"It's *The Hidden Staircase*!" Charlie shouts.



"Thank you so much, Charlie," says Ms. Edwards. "The case of the missing book, *The Hidden Staircase*, has been solved."

Charlie looks near the computers and under the computer table for the missing book.

Charlie asks Ms. Edwards if Mrs. Jacobs took the missing book back to her science class.

Charlie sees something that looks like the corner of the missing book poking out from under a beanbag chair.

Wildlife Crossings



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Many kinds of animals use wildlife crossings to get across busy roads and highways.

6a



© Rudmer Zwerver/Shutterstock.com

Wildlife crossings help protect animals from becoming threatened. If they cannot get across busy roads for food or for mating, their species could disappear.

excited

endangered

7a



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Some wildlife crossings are used by animals such as grizzly bears and moose. These crossings are bridges as wide as six-lane highways. Builders know that some animals are nervous about structures made by humans. So they build the crossings to seem like something in nature. They add grass and plants and then rocks and piles of brush on the bridges.

Other animals such as mountain lions, deer, foxes, and even mice like to use smaller crossings that seem more like the places where these animals live in nature. These wildlife crossings are often narrow pathways that go under roads.

7a



Courtesy of Colorado DOT

Some animals, such as deer and coyotes, are not afraid to be around humans and will use a wildlife crossing even before it is finished. When deer use these crossings, other animals can smell that deer have crossed, and they can see the path the deer made.

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Communities are building wildlife crossings because people are concerned about animals. Every year on Christmas Island, millions of red crabs march to the ocean to lay their eggs on the beach. Crab bridges were built across a busy road so that the crabs can climb up and walk across a bridge while cars and trucks move underneath them. The crabs then walk down the other side and continue to the beach.

8a



© Wondrous World Images 2018

In Washington, the Nutty Narrows Bridge is made of rope. Squirrels love to hop across their special bridge while cars and trucks drive by below them.

8a



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In Massachusetts, some salamanders were having trouble crossing a street each spring to reach breeding ponds on the other side. People began putting the salamanders in buckets and passing them across the street. City leaders solved the problem by building a tunnel under the road that hundreds of salamanders and toads now cross each year.

The author wants the reader to know —

how important wildlife crossings are
for the safety of many kinds of
animals

how watching red crabs use wildlife
crossings to march to the ocean each
spring helps other animals

why passing salamanders and toads
in buckets across the street is a
problem for animals

The cicada killer wasps



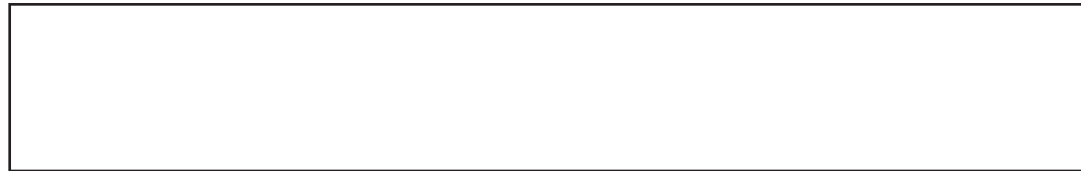
Clarence Holmes Wildlife/Alamy Stock Photo

A common wasp in Texas has a very scary name—the cicada killer wasp!



Clarence Holmes Wildlife/Alamy Stock Photo

Cicada killer wasps dig burrows in the ground and pile the dirt in a mound outside.



Then it's time to hunt!

Then it's time to hunt?



Cicadas are insects known for their loud call, which rings from trees above the summer. Cicada killer wasps hunt cicadas and paralyze them with their stingers.

throughout the summer

under the summer

within the summer

12a



Clarence Holmes Wildlife/Alamy Stock Photo

After a cicada killer wasp stuns a cicada with its stinger, it carries the cicada to its burrow and takes it inside. Then the female lays an egg on the cicada. Cicada killer wasps do not usually sting people. The baby wasp hatches and eats the cicada. Then the baby wasp makes a cocoon and sleeps for the winter. It will hatch as an adult wasp in July of the next year.

*Then the female lays an egg
on the cicada.*

*Cicada killer wasps do not
usually sting people.*

*It will hatch as an adult wasp
in July of the next year.*

Some batfish have two red lips.



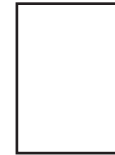
Steve Bloom Images/Alamy Stock Photo

Red-lipped batfish have two bright-red lips.

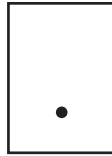


Steve Bloom Images/Alamy Stock Photo

Red-lipped batfish have one long point on their head. It looks like a nose, but it is not used for breathing



14b





Helmut Corneli/Alamy Stock Photo

Red-lipped batfish do not always swim like other fish. They can also move their fin on the ocean floor like leg.

fins	leg
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fin	legs
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fins	legs
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Beara Creative/Alamy Stock Photo

Red-lipped batfish may look strange, but each part of their body helps them survive. They use the point on their head a fin on their back end to catch small fish.

They use the point on their head but a fin on their back end to catch small fish.

They use the point on their head and a fin on their back end to catch small fish.

They use the point on their head so a fin on their back end to catch small fish.

These Animals Come in Tiny Sizes



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Some penguins, poodles, and horses stay small their entire lives.

Most penguins are black and white and stand about 3 feet tall. However, there are some penguins that have blue and white feathers and stand only about 13 inches tall. They are called miniature penguins. The blue feathers help these small penguins hide from enemies that are in the water below or in the sky above.

18a



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Long ago, poodles mainly helped people with hunting. Their thick, curly coats kept them warm when they jumped into water to fetch ducks. In fact, the name "poodle" comes from a German word that means "splash in the water."



People wanted a small poodle that they could hold in their laps. So breeders selected their smallest poodles for mating, which meant that the poodle puppies would be small like their parents. Over time the poodle puppies became even smaller. Today, miniature poodles are a popular breed.

People wanted dogs with thick, curly coats to fetch ducks.

People wanted dogs that would jump into the water while hunting.

People wanted dogs that they could hold in their laps.

Most horses are taller than an adult human and big enough to be ridden by one. However, miniature horses, sometimes called minis, are so tiny that only a small child can ride them. Although the body of a mini looks just like the body of a big horse, minis are less than 3 feet tall.





Miniature horses are usually smart and gentle, and they make great pets. Some minis are trained to be guide animals to help people who cannot see or hear well.

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