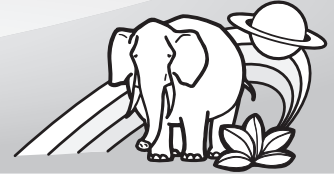
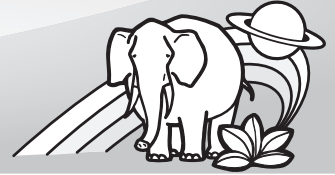


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# Introduction



\* **Science is thrilling.**

*Think of discovering a 5,000-year-old mummy in a glacier.*

\* **It has changed our world.**

*Think of how an entire city had to be abandoned and all of its residents evacuated forever because of a nuclear disaster.*

\* **It affects our lives daily.**

*Think of how thanks to the work of Joseph Lister, doctors must now clean their hands and instruments between surgeries and patients.*

Reading comprehension can be practiced and improved while coupled with science instruction. This book presents short, fascinating science stories. The stories were chosen to arouse curiosity; augment basic science facts and concepts taught at the sixth-grade level; and introduce a world of ideas, people, and animals.

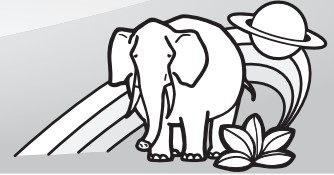
A page of questions follows each story. These questions will provide students familiarity with different types of test questions. In addition, the practice they provide will help students develop good testing skills. Questions are written so that they lead students to focus on what was read. They provide practice for finding the main idea, as well as specific details. They provide practice in deciphering new and unknown vocabulary words. In addition, the questions encourage students to think beyond the facts. For example, every question set has an analogy question in which students are expected to think about the relationship between two things and find a pair of words with the same type of relationship. Other questions provide an opportunity for students to extrapolate and consider possible consequences relevant to the information provided in the story.

The book is designed so that writing can be incorporated into every lesson. The level of writing will depend on what the teacher desires, as well as the needs of the students.

Lessons in *Nonfiction Reading Comprehension: Science, Grade 6* meet and are correlated to the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) standards. They are listed on page 8.

A place for *Nonfiction Reading Comprehension: Science, Grade 6* can be found in every classroom or home. It can be a part of daily instruction in time designated for both reading and science. It can be used for both group and individual instruction. Stories can be read with someone or on one's own. *Nonfiction Reading Comprehension: Science, Grade 6* can help students improve in multiple areas, including reading, science, critical thinking, writing, and test-taking.

# Meeting Standards



Listed below are the McREL standards for Language Arts Level 2 (Grades 3–5).

Copyright 2004 McREL  
Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning  
2250 S. Parker Rd, Suite 500  
Aurora, CO 80014  
Telephone: 303-337-0990  
Website: [www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks](http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks)

McRel Standards are in **bold**. Benchmarks are in regular print. All lessons meet the following standards and benchmarks unless noted.

## **Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process**

- Uses a variety of strategies to edit and publish written work (*All lessons where writing or typing a complete sentence option is followed.*)

## **Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing**

- Uses a variety of sentence structures to expand and embed ideas (*All lessons where writing or typing a complete sentence option is followed.*)

## **Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions**

- Uses simple and compound sentences in written compositions
- Uses pronouns, nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives
- Uses conventions of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (*All lessons where writing or typing a complete sentence option is followed.*)

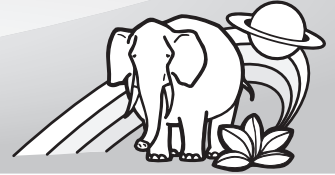
## **Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process**

- Establishes and adjusts purposes for reading
- Uses a variety of strategies to extend reading vocabulary
- Uses specific strategies to clear up confusing parts of a text
- Reflects on what has been learned after reading and formulates ideas, opinions, and personal responses to texts

## **Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of informational texts**

- Summarizes and paraphrases information in texts
- Uses new information to adjust and extend personal knowledge base
- Draws conclusions and makes inferences based on explicit and implicit information in texts

# Space Animals



**These are new words to practice.**

**Say each word 10 times.**

\* breed

\* gravity

\* mongrel

\* adapt

\* extensive

\* osteoporosis

\* acceleration

\* includes

**Before or after reading the story, write one sentence that contains at least one new word.**

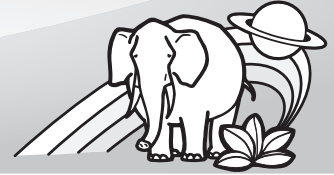
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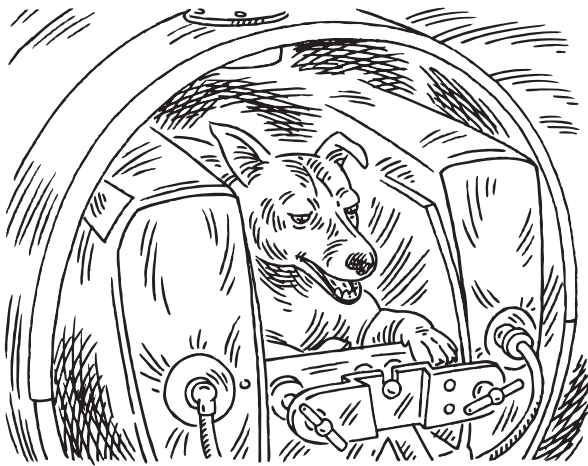
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# Space Animals



The first living thing to be shot into space and orbit the planet was a dog. The dog's name was Laika. "Laika" means "little lemon." Laika was not a special breed of dog. She was a mongrel, or mix of several breeds. Laika may have been just a mongrel, but she made history when she flew on the Russian spacecraft *Sputnik 2* in 1957.



**Laika**

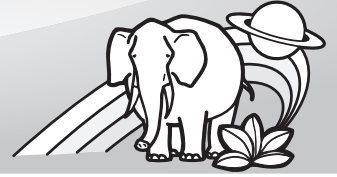
Before her flight, Laika underwent extensive training. When something is extensive, it is far-reaching. It applies to many things. Laika's extensive training included getting used to small spaces and loud noises. It included getting used to high acceleration forces. Laika had to learn not to panic when she felt the spacecraft accelerate, or speed up, quickly.

The next two animals shot into space were dogs, too. The dogs went up in *Sputnik 5*, a year after Laika. One of the dogs gave birth to a litter of six puppies after her return. John F. Kennedy, the president of the United States, received one of the puppies as a gift. Kennedy helped to launch the American space program. The first animals Americans sent into space were monkeys and chimpanzees. The animals were used to test the effects of high acceleration and equipment for manned spaceflights.

Today, human astronauts pilot missions. Still, animals are an important part of the space program. Scientists use animals for experiments. The experiments are designed to help scientists learn about the effects of living in zero gravity. They are designed to help learn more about how animals can adapt, or change. For example, astronauts brought spiders on a 1973 space mission. At first, the spiders could not build webs in the zero gravity. As the spiders adapted to zero gravity, their skills returned.

Osteoporosis is a weakening of the bones. People on Earth suffer from osteoporosis. Astronauts in zero gravity suffer from it, too. Rats and mice are part of space experiments designed to help scientists learn more about osteoporosis. The list of animals sent into space includes moths and flies. It includes frogs and newts. It includes minnows and goldfish.

# Space Animals



After reading the story, answer the questions.  
Fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

1. This story is mainly about
  - (a) some animal experiments.
  - (b) how animals adapt in space.
  - (c) Laika, the first animal in space.
  - (d) animals that have been sent into space.
  
2. How many puppies were in the space dog's litter?
  - (a) 2
  - (b) 4
  - (c) 6
  - (d) 8
  
3. Think about how the word *adapts* relates to *changes*. Which words relate in the same way?
 

**adapts : changes**

  - (a) includes : cuts out
  - (b) receives : tests on
  - (c) launches : starts up
  - (d) accelerates : slows down
  
4. Why might animals have been sent into space before people?
  - (a) Scientists wanted to test equipment.
  - (b) Scientists needed time to design experiments.
  - (c) Animals were better at undergoing extensive training.
  - (d) Animals are not affected by high acceleration forces.
  
5. What stands out about the list of animals sent into space on manned spaceflights?
  - (a) They are all small.
  - (b) They are all mammals.
  - (c) They are all able to swim.
  - (d) They are all suffering from osteoporosis.