



THE SCIENCE OF
Air

THE READING LINK

for *The Science of Air Teacher's Guide* and *Mr. Slaptail's Secret*

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BioEd Teacher Resources from the Center for Educational Outreach

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Context

Read Main Idea

Cause
Effect

Inference

Sequence
of Events

Conclusions
Write

This Reading Link contains ready-to-use reading and language arts activities that are aligned with The Science of Air integrated unit. It is not intended to represent a comprehensive reading program. The activities are related to language arts objectives common to many curricula and cover a range of grade and ability levels. Teachers may wish to select from these activities those that are most appropriate for their own students.

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The activities described in this book are intended for school-age children under direct supervision of adults. The authors, Baylor College of Medicine and the publisher cannot be responsible for any accidents or injuries that may result from conduct of the activities, from not specifically following directions, or from ignoring cautions contained in the text.

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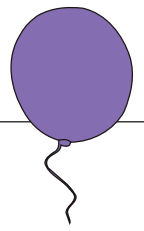
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Word Meaning/Context Clues

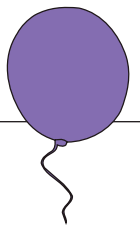


1. **Bag of Words.** Find the word in the bag that fits best in each blank space. Write the correct words in the blanks.



- a. Rosie sneezed when the curtains became dusty. She was _____ to dust.
- b. The smells of smoke, paint and other _____ were irritating to her nose.
- c. When Mr. Slaptail used Riff's _____, he found out that his lungs could hold more air.
- d. Some chemicals are so _____ to human beings that they can make you sick, or even kill you.
- e. Riff's flyer was an empty tin can that looked like a _____ tube with no ends.
- f. How much air can your lungs hold? I bet my lung _____ is larger than yours!

Word Meaning/Context Clues (cont.)



2. **Mixing Words.** A compound word combines two other words. For example, **space + ship = spaceship.**

- a. What words can you make by combining another word with **space**?
What other compound words can you make using the word **ship**?

Words with space

Words with ship

- b. Here are some more compound words used in *Mr. Slaptail's Secret*: **moonlight, sleepyhead, earthquake, somebody, nobody, something.**

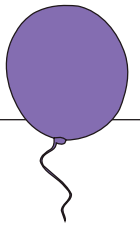
Take these words apart, and make new compound words by combining some of the single words with other words. For example:

something = some + thing
some + where = somewhere
any + thing = anything



What new words can you make?

Word Meaning/Context Clues (cont.)



3. **Many Meanings.** Sometimes a word can have more than one meaning. Look at the different definitions for **trip** and **spot**. Then pick the definition of those words that fits best in each sentence. Write its number next to the sentence.

trip

1. a journey from one place to another
2. to catch your foot on something and stumble or fall
3. to cause someone to stumble
4. to move lightly with quick steps; to skip

_____ Watch your step so you won't trip over that rope!

_____ Riff had a fine trip on the bus.

_____ I didn't mean to trip you with my foot.

_____ Riff watched Rosie trip across the field to Mr. Slaptail's house.

spot

1. a small mark or stain
2. a place or location
3. to mark with spots
4. to find or locate

_____ It was too dark for Riff to spot his flyer.

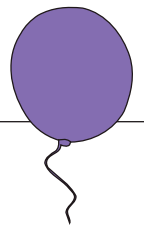
_____ This is the spot where they found the old tub.

_____ Rosie saw a dirty spot on Mr. Slaptail's coat.

_____ Riff will spot the flyer he is making with red dots.



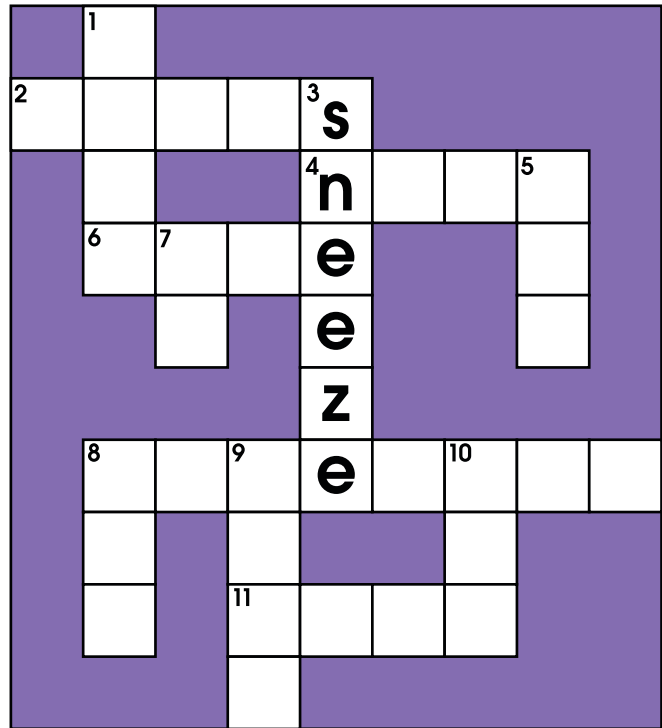
Word Meaning/Context Clues (cont.)



4. **Mr. Slaptail's Secret Crossword Puzzle.** All of the words in this crossword puzzle are in the story, *Mr. Slaptail's Secret*.

Across

2. Organs in the chest that take in air during breathing
4. Riff will be back _____ summer.
6. Rubber wheel covering that is filled with air
8. A bad reaction to something in the air or something you eat
11. Riff's _____ slipped out from under him, and he fell.

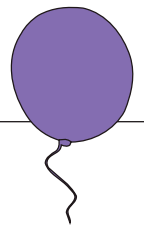


Down

1. Tiny, dry, powdery particles in the air
3. To force air through the nose and mouth with a sudden, violent burst
5. A low, round container for liquids or solids
7. The opposite of out
8. What we breathe in and out of our lungs
9. The direction in which Riff's flyer turned
10. To go for something and bring it back; to understand



Sequence of Events



1. Read pages 10, 11 and 12 in *Mr. Slaptail's Secret*. Which one of the three things below happened FIRST? Write 1 next to it. Then write 2 by the event that happened next, and 3 by the one that happened last.

_____ Riff and Rosie smelled smoke and paint when a door opened.

_____ The old man told Riff and Rosie to get off his property.

_____ Riff found his flyer in a pile of junk.

2. After you have read the whole story, find which event below happened LAST. Write 4 next to it. Then write the numbers 1, 2 and 3 to show the order in which the other events happened.

_____ Riff and Rosie landed in Mr. Slaptail's cellar.

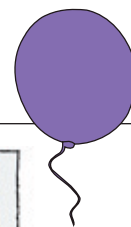
_____ Mr. Slaptail gave Riff a toy airplane to take home with him.

_____ Riff saw someone dragging a big, lumpy bag along the road.

_____ All the neighbors helped clean up Mr. Slaptail's house.



Cause and Effect Relationships



Read pages 20 and 21 of the storybook.
Then write your answers to these questions.



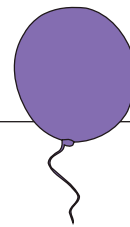
1. Why did Rosie start sneezing?

2. Why could Riff and Rosie suddenly see strange shapes in the shadows?

3. Why did Mr. Slaptail come to the door at the top of his cellar stairs?

4. Why did Riff think they were in double trouble?

Details and Supporting Ideas

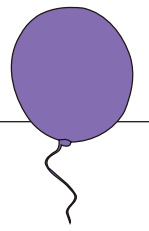


1. Look at the picture on page 2. In your own words, write down what you see. Tell who, where and what. Include as many details as you can.

2. When Riff and Rosie went to Mr. Slaptail's house, they saw many things that needed to be changed or cleaned up. Name as many unhealthy things as you can about Mr. Slaptail and his home.



Details and Supporting Ideas (cont.)

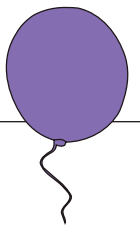


3. Think about the three main characters in the story. Choose which one is your favorite. Tell why you like that character the best, giving as many reasons as you can.

My favorite character in the story, *Mr. Slaptail's Secret* is _____.

That is because





1. **Choosing the Main Idea.** Look at the yellow box on page 7. Which sentence below best tells the main idea of this Science Box? Fill in the circle by your answer.

- That sun is bright!
- Dust is everywhere.
- This little critter is a dust mite.
- Dust is composed of many particles.

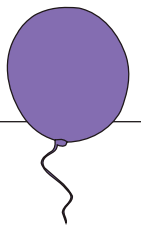


2. Look at the yellow box on page 23. Which sentence below best tells the main idea? Fill in the circle by your answer.

- Pollution of the air inside our homes can cause health problems.
- Twenty-five million people in the U.S. have allergies.
- Sometimes there are chemicals in the air that bother everyone.
- Since we spend most of our time inside, clean indoor air is important.

3. What do you think is the main idea of the story, *Mr. Slaptail's Secret*? Write it, in your own words, in the space below.

Summarizing



1. After you have read *Mr. Slaptail's Secret*, list 5 things that people can do to keep the air in their homes more clean and healthy.

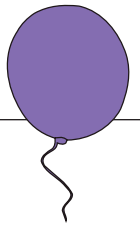
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

2. How were Riff and Rosie able to help Mr. Slaptail and the neighborhood?



3. Pretend you are Riff, visiting your cousin Rosie. Write a short note to your family at home, telling them about Mr. Slaptail. What problems did he have? What was his secret?

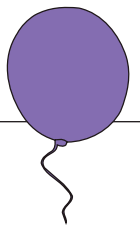
Fact and Opinion



Facts are true. Opinions are what someone thinks, but they might not be true. Tell whether you think each of these sentences from the story states a fact or an opinion. Write F or O in each space. (Look back in the story if necessary.)

- _____ Rosie is allergic to Riff. (page 2)
- _____ Riff's old tin can isn't worth caring about. (page 4)
- _____ The yard around Mr. Slaptail's house looks like a junk yard. (page 8)
- _____ Mr. Slaptail's yard is a gold mine. (page 10)
- _____ Riff and Rosie were trying to trick Mr. Slaptail with the flyer. (page 13)
- _____ Riff's flyer really does fly. (page 13)
- _____ Riff and Rosie are trespassing inside Mr. Slaptail's house. (page 21)
- _____ Something in Mr. Slaptail's house is making Rosie feel sick. (page 24)
- _____ Mr. Slaptail is not sick, just old and tired. (page 24)





1. Fill in the circle by the word that best answers each question.

a. How did Riff feel when he saw something outside the window in the moonlight and said, “What’s that guy dragging . . . ? He sure looks creepy!”?

- afraid
- friendly
- happy
- angry

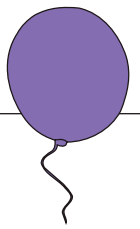
b. How do you think Riff felt when he said to Mr. Slaptail, “I collect stuff, too. Do you make things with it?”?

- afraid
- friendly
- sad
- angry

c. How did Mr. Slaptail feel when he said, “This lungometer of yours is great! Just look at how much I blew out this time!”?

- happy
- angry
- sad
- afraid





Following Written Directions

2. Think of all the reasons Mr. Slaptail might have had to make toys for needy children. Write a list of possible reasons below.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

Following Written Directions

Follow the directions on pages 32 and 33 of *Mr. Slaptail's Secret* to make a paper flyer. Work with a partner to make a flyer together the first time, and then make and decorate your own flying cylinder.

