

## Grade 5 – Week 1

### Reading 1: The Great Sock Debate

It started as a regular Monday morning. Caleb had just finished his math worksheet and was about to head out for a nature walk when his mom said, “Not until you find the match to that sock.”

Caleb looked down. One sock had stripes. The other had a cartoon taco. “They’re both clean,” he protested. “And I’m wearing shoes. No one’s going to see them!”

His mom raised an eyebrow. “We homeschool, not no-school.”

He groaned, dragging his feet to the laundry basket. Twenty minutes later, after sorting a mountain of socks that had apparently multiplied since last week, Caleb still hadn’t found the match.

“I think the dryer eats them,” he muttered.

“That, or your room,” his sister called from the hallway.

Eventually, he found the striped sock inside a pillowcase.

“Victory!” he yelled.

His mom smiled. “Great! Now let’s review fractions while you fold everything.”

Caleb sighed. “I knew there was a catch.”

### Questions:

1. What was Caleb doing before his mom brought up the sock issue?
2. What was unusual about his socks?
3. How did his mom respond to his argument?
4. Where did he find the missing sock?
5. What was his “reward” for finding it?

## Reading 2: The Library Fine Fiasco

Every other Thursday, Emma and her family went to the library. It was one of her favorite homeschool perks—no lines, no bell ringing, and unlimited time in the cozy reading chairs.

This week, she proudly walked in with a full tote of returns. But when she got to the desk, the librarian gave her a look.

“Emma... did you bring back *The Secret of Maple Hill*?”

Emma paused. “Umm... maybe?”

A check on the computer confirmed her worst fear: the book was still checked out, and now it had a fine.

“Twenty cents per day, times thirteen days...” the librarian tapped the calculator.

“Two dollars and sixty cents.”

Emma gasped. “That’s like... four pieces of bubble gum and a donut!”

Her mom offered a solution: pay the fine with money from her fun budget or come home and search for the book.

Two hours later, Emma found it—under the couch, being used as a ramp for her brother’s toy cars.

The librarian let her off with a warning and a smile.

“Next time,” she said, “no donuts until the books are checked in.”

### Questions:

1. What did Emma enjoy about going to the library?
2. What problem did she encounter?
3. How much was the fine?
4. What were her choices for solving it?
5. Where was the book found?

## Grade 5 – Week 2

### Reading 1: The Egg Explosion

Noah was on a mission: make scrambled eggs for lunch without any help. He'd watched his mom do it dozens of times, and today was his chance to prove he could handle the kitchen.

He cracked the first egg a little too hard—shell pieces everywhere. The second egg bounced off the edge of the bowl and landed on the floor.

“Minor setbacks,” he muttered.

By the fourth egg, things were looking up—until he forgot to turn down the stove. The eggs turned brown fast, and one sizzled out of the pan like it was trying to escape.

That's when the smoke alarm beeped.

His sister ran in, holding her nose. “Did the eggs attack?”

His mom opened a window. “Well, you've learned what *not* to do. That's part of learning too.”

Noah frowned at the pan. “Maybe I'll make cereal next time.”

But after a few deep breaths and a clean pan, he tried again—with much better results. He even garnished his plate with parsley.

“You're basically a chef now,” his sister said... while feeding her eggs to the dog.

### Questions:

1. What was Noah trying to do independently?
2. What went wrong with the eggs?
3. How did his mom respond to the situation?
4. What did his sister say to tease him?
5. What did Noah decide after trying again?

## **Reading 2: The Backyard Olympics**

The homeschool group had a brilliant idea—host the “Backyard Olympics.” Each family submitted an event. The Browns brought hula hoops, the Johnsons made a pool noodle obstacle course, and Emma’s family? Potato sack races. Caleb was ready. He trained all week by hopping in an old sleeping bag down the hallway. On the day of the event, his sack ripped halfway through the race. He face-planted into the grass, rolled over, and shouted, “Ten out of ten—would crash again!”

Lila won the gold medal in spoon-egg balancing. Her secret? “Super glue,” she joked.

The last event was the homeschool spelling relay, where you had to spell a word while hopping on one foot.

Everyone ended up laughing so hard, no one remembered who won.

As they passed out chocolate-chip medals, Emma said, “This should be every Friday.”

No one disagreed.

### **Questions:**

1. What was the “Backyard Olympics”?
2. What event did Caleb train for?
3. What happened during his race?
4. What was Lila’s “secret” to winning?
5. What made this event so memorable?

## Grade 5 – Week 3

### Reading 1: The Forgotten Science Project

Sophie woke up Tuesday morning with a jolt.

“Oh no. Oh no no no.”

She had completely forgotten her science experiment for co-op. It was due that afternoon.

Her mom calmly asked, “Can you do a simple one with what we have?”

They found vinegar, baking soda, a balloon, and an empty bottle.

Fifteen minutes later, Sophie was standing in the backyard with goggles, her brother as her assistant, and three half-inflated balloons.

She finally got one to puff up dramatically with a fizzing *whoosh!*

At co-op, she explained her “emergency experiment,” and everyone clapped.

Her teacher laughed, “Sometimes panic leads to brilliance!”

Sophie whispered to herself, “Next time... I’m setting a reminder.”

### Questions:

1. What did Sophie forget?
2. How did her mom help her problem-solve?
3. What materials did she use?
4. How did the experiment turn out?
5. What lesson did Sophie learn?

## **Reading 2: The Great Homeschool Field Trip Fail**

It was supposed to be the perfect field trip. Jonah's mom had planned a visit to the nature center complete with hiking, bird watching, and lunch by the lake.

Except...

The GPS took them to a goat farm.

Then it started raining.

Then Jonah stepped in mud so deep his shoe disappeared forever.

"We're making memories!" his mom said cheerfully while wringing out her sock.

Eventually, they ended up at a gas station eating granola bars and laughing about their "field trip fail."

Jonah scribbled in his notebook: "Today I learned about adaptability and goat noises. Also, never trust the GPS."

### **Questions:**

1. What was the original plan for the field trip?
2. What went wrong along the way?
3. How did Jonah lose his shoe?
4. What did his mom say about the day?
5. What did Jonah write in his notebook?

## Grade 5 – Week 4

### Reading 1: The Living Room Time Machine

Lily's history assignment was to write about the 1800s—but she didn't want to just "write about it."

She decided to *live it*.

She turned the living room into a prairie cabin. Blankets became log walls. She wore a bonnet (borrowed from last Halloween) and made "butter" by shaking cream in a jar for what felt like 3,000 years.

Her brother played the part of the wild raccoon, complete with growling sound effects.

When her dad walked in, she handed him a "guest pass" to the 1800s.

He laughed and said, "I've never seen a homeschool assignment quite like this."

Lily turned in a full report—complete with photos, a hand-drawn cabin map, and a butter sample (well, sort of).

Her mom added, "And don't forget the wild raccoon."

### Questions:

1. What was Lily's history assignment?
2. How did she make it more exciting?
3. What role did her brother play?
4. What was her dad's reaction?
5. What did she include in her final report?

## **Reading 2: The Multiplication Rap Battle**

During math review, Ezra challenged his sister to a rap battle—about multiplication.

At first, it was a joke.

“Eight times eight is sixty-four, I’ve got math facts and even more!” he rapped.

His sister shot back: “Seven times six is forty-two, I do my math faster than you!”

Soon, their mom was filming with her phone while they battled in the kitchen.

They went on for ten minutes, rhyming, laughing, and tossing in random math facts.

Their mom uploaded it to the homeschool group chat.

Next week? Every kid in the group came to co-op with a math rap.

Ezra whispered, “We started a movement.”

### **Questions:**

1. What did Ezra and his sister do during math?
2. What was the theme of their rap battle?
3. How did their mom react?
4. What happened when their video was shared?
5. What did Ezra say at the end?

## Grade 5 – Week 5

### Reading 1: The Kitchen Chemistry Catastrophe

Ben's mom said he could do a "kitchen science experiment" for his homeschool assignment—as long as he cleaned up afterward.

He decided to make homemade bath bombs using baking soda, citric acid, and food coloring. Simple enough, right?

Well, the first one fizzed before he even got it into the mold. The second batch was too dry and crumbled like a cookie. The third attempt? He accidentally added vinegar. Instant explosion. Pink bubbles flooded the counter.

His sister walked in, blinked twice, and said, "Did you try to clean the kitchen or defeat it?"

Ben sighed, wiped his face with a towel, and said, "Scientific progress is messy."

In the end, he wrote a very honest lab report titled *Three Ways Not to Make a Bath Bomb* and included a photo of the kitchen chaos. His mom gave him credit for effort—and double credit for mopping the floor.

### Questions:

1. What experiment did Ben attempt for his homeschool project?
2. What mistakes did he make along the way?
3. What comment did his sister make?
4. What was the title of Ben's lab report?
5. How did his mom respond to the situation?

## **Reading 2: The Laundry Basket Timeline**

For history class, Emma had to create a timeline of major American events. Her mom gave her a blank roll of paper and suggested she make it “interactive.”

Emma had a better idea.

She took the laundry baskets, flipped them upside down, and taped events to each one. Then she lined them up through the living room like stepping stones of time—from the American Revolution to the moon landing.

By the time she reached the Civil War basket, her cat had climbed into the one labeled “Industrial Revolution.”

Her brother tried to walk the whole timeline without touching the floor and tripped into “World War II.”

“I’m learning and doing P.E.,” he said proudly.

Emma took a photo of the mess and turned it in. “I call it living history,” she said. Her mom just laughed and gave her an A for creativity.

### **Questions:**

1. What was Emma’s assignment for history class?
2. How did she make her timeline interactive?
3. What unexpected event involved the cat?
4. What did her brother do during the timeline activity?
5. What did Emma call her project?

## Grade 5 – Week 6

### Reading 1: The Mystery of the Vanishing Charger

Liam was certain his math wasn't finished because of one thing: his tablet charger had vanished. Again.

He looked under the couch cushions, behind the bookshelf, and even inside the bread box (don't ask). No luck.

"Maybe we should file a missing persons report," he said.

"Or blame the Sock Monster," his mom joked.

Just as he was giving up, he spotted it—plugged into the toaster.

His sister shrugged. "I needed a new angle for my toast art time-lapse."

Liam blinked. "You filmed toast?"

"Technically, I filmed it transforming. It's educational."

They ended up watching the video together while Liam charged his tablet.

He finally did his math an hour later—while eating toast.

### Questions:

1. Why couldn't Liam start his math assignment?
2. Where did he search for his charger?
3. Where was it finally found?
4. What was his sister using it for?
5. How did they resolve the situation?

## **Reading 2: The Pet Sitting Mix-Up**

Sophie agreed to watch her neighbor's guinea pig while they were out of town. Her mom wrote down instructions, but Sophie was confident she could handle it.

Day one went great. Clean cage. Fresh lettuce. Lots of squeaks.

Day two... she forgot.

At bedtime, she gasped. "Muffin!"

She and her dad rushed over in pajamas, carrying a flashlight, a half-eaten cucumber, and a lot of guilt.

When they opened the door, Muffin squeaked, completely fine. Her food dish was full.

Sophie looked confused.

Turns out, her little brother had been secretly taking care of Muffin for "animal-care credit" in his homeschool log.

"You're welcome," he said, smugly.

Sophie glared. "Next time, I'm adding 'Muffin Watcher' to my resume."

### **Questions:**

1. What responsibility did Sophie take on?
2. What mistake did she make on day two?
3. How did her family respond?
4. Who was secretly caring for Muffin?
5. What did Sophie learn from the experience?

## Grade 5 – Week 7

### Reading 1: The Math Dice Duel

Ezra’s mom gave him a new game for math review—dice and a stack of cards with math challenges. He was supposed to roll two dice and use addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division to match a card.

At first, Ezra tried to play alone. But then his sister walked by and said, “I bet I can solve it faster.”

Suddenly it was war.

One by one, they battled it out. “Six times four!”

“Twenty-four!”

“Eight plus nine!”

“Seventeen!”

Things got intense. Someone flipped the coffee table. The cat ran for its life.

By the end, they were tied 8–8. Their mom came in, saw the mess, and said, “So... math happened?”

Ezra grinned. “The most intense math of my life.”

### Questions:

1. What kind of game was Ezra supposed to play?
2. Who joined him in the activity?
3. How did their math challenge escalate?
4. What was the final score?
5. What was their mom’s reaction?

## **Reading 2: The Mystery Breakfast Plan**

Layla wanted to surprise her family with breakfast for their homeschool morning. She made a list: toast, fruit, and eggs. She even prepped the table the night before with cheerful place cards.

But when she went to crack the eggs... they were fake. Plastic ones from the play kitchen.

She ran to the fridge. No eggs. No toast.

Panic.

She improvised: peanut butter on crackers, a banana split in three, and yogurt topped with cereal dust.

When her parents sat down, she said, "Welcome to Mystery Breakfast. Please pretend you're on a cooking show and be kind."

Her dad took a bite and said, "This is the weirdest breakfast I've ever loved."

Layla wrote it in her homeschool journal: *Meal Plan Fail = Memory Win.*

### **Questions:**

1. What was Layla's plan for the morning?
2. What problem did she run into with the eggs?
3. What substitutions did she make?
4. What was her dad's response?
5. What did she write about it in her journal?

## Grade 5 – Week 8

### Reading 1: The Compost Confusion

As part of their science unit, Logan’s family started composting food scraps.

There was just one problem: no one agreed on what could go in the bin.

“Can I compost peanut butter?” Logan asked.

“Only if it’s organic,” his mom said.

“What about cereal milk?”

“No. Just... no.”

The bin started to smell like old banana peels and mystery science.

Then the dog knocked it over, spreading soggy lettuce and eggshells across the porch.

Logan’s brother came outside, saw the mess, and said, “Is this what environmental education looks like?”

They cleaned it up and made a new sign: *Compost Rules—No peanut butter. No milk. Definitely no dog access.*

Logan added, “Next time, let’s study volcanoes instead.”

### Questions:

1. What was the purpose of the compost bin?
2. What confusion did Logan have?
3. What happened with the dog?
4. How did the family respond to the chaos?
5. What did Logan suggest for next time?

## **Reading 2: The Great Pencil Panic**

Just as the homeschool group's spelling bee was about to start, Nora realized she forgot her pencil.

She borrowed one from Jonah—who warned her it was “cursed.”

Nora laughed and used it anyway.

Her first word: “onomatopoeia.”

Snap. The pencil broke.

Her second word: “embarrassment.”

The eraser fell off.

By the third word, the pencil launched from her hand and hit the ceiling.

She looked at Jonah, who just nodded and whispered, “Told you.”

Nora ended up borrowing five pencils that day but won second place anyway.

She gave Jonah a trophy made of chewed erasers.

He said it was the best prize he'd ever received.

### **Questions:**

1. What event was happening that day?
2. What did Nora forget to bring?
3. What happened with the pencil she borrowed?
4. How did Jonah respond?
5. What kind of “trophy” did Nora give him?

## Grade 5 – Week 9

### Reading 1: The Lemonade Business Breakdown

Jonah had a brilliant idea for his homeschool economics project: a lemonade stand. But not just any lemonade stand. His had branding. It had a slogan. It had a poster made with highlighters and glitter glue. It was called “Sour Power: Pucker Up and Pay Up.”

He set it up at the end of the driveway with a fold-out table, a jar of quarters, and a pitcher of his mom’s secret lemonade recipe. His little brother, Eli, begged to help. Jonah hesitated.

“Fine,” he said. “But no yelling. This is a professional operation.”

Eli nodded. Ten minutes later, he was standing on a chair, waving his arms, and shouting, “SALE! Two for one! Get your sticky yellow cups of awesome!”

Jonah nearly dropped the cash jar. “Stop that! You’re ruining the brand!”

By noon, they’d given away more lemonade than they sold. A neighbor asked if they took credit cards. Eli proudly whipped out a laminated library card.

Jonah sighed. “Ma’am, we only accept real money, not reading points.”

After two hours, they had made a grand total of \$3.17. And used up the entire pitcher.

That night, Jonah wrote in his homeschool journal: *Note to self: never hire Eli. But always say yes to lemonade.*

### Questions:

1. What made Jonah’s lemonade stand unique?
2. How did Eli try to “help” the business?
3. What unusual payment method did Eli offer?
4. How much money did they make?
5. What did Jonah learn by the end?

## Reading 2: The Puzzle Piece Disaster

Naomi had been working on the 1,000-piece puzzle for three whole days. She had started during a rainy afternoon and spread the pieces across the homeschool table, the nearby bench, and half of the kitchen floor. The picture was a forest with wolves under a glowing moon, and she was almost done—just five pieces left.

Then came the tragedy.

“Where is the last piece?” she asked.

She checked under the rug. Under her books. Under her socks. She checked the trash can and even the dog bowl, which was suspiciously close to the puzzle area. Her younger sister, Abby, wandered in holding a glue stick and a popsicle stick covered in glitter.

“Look what I made!” Abby said. “It’s a magic wand!”

Naomi blinked. “Why is there a puzzle piece glued to the top?”

Abby twirled. “Because it sparkled.”

Naomi gasped. “That’s the MOON! That’s the center of the puzzle!”

After a small moment of horror, they carefully peeled the piece off, wiped off most of the glitter, and pressed it into place. It was a little crooked and slightly sparkly, but it fit.

“It’s the fanciest puzzle moon in history,” Naomi said.

She took a picture, wrote about it in her homeschool journal, and titled it: *Art Meets Panic: A Puzzle Tale*.

### Questions:

1. How long had Naomi worked on her puzzle?
2. What was the puzzle’s image?
3. Who had the missing piece, and what had they done with it?
4. How did Naomi fix the situation?
5. What was the title of her journal entry?

## **Grade 5 – Week 10**

### **Reading 1: The Homeschool Schedule Shuffle**

Monday morning began with a plan. A big one.

Micah's mom taped a giant laminated schedule to the fridge. It was color-coded and broken down by hour: 8:00 - Breakfast. 9:00 - Math. 10:00 - Science. 11:00 - Reading.

Micah stared at it. "This looks like the menu at a very organized restaurant."

His mom smiled. "Structure helps us succeed."

At 9:04, the printer jammed. At 9:15, the neighbor's dog escaped and they had to help catch it. At 10:00, the science experiment spilled vinegar on the schedule, smearing the "Art" block into "At."

By lunch, the paper was soggy, half the blocks had question marks, and Micah had written in a new subject: "Unscheduled Life Lessons."

His mom leaned on the counter and sighed. "We don't need perfect. We just need progress."

Micah agreed. He turned the schedule into an art project called "How the Week Went." It included spaghetti sauce stains and glitter.

They hung it on the wall as a reminder: sometimes real life is the best kind of school.

### **Questions:**

1. What kind of schedule did Micah's mom create?
2. What happened to throw off the plan?
3. What did Micah rename part of the schedule?
4. How did they repurpose the messy schedule?
5. What lesson did they learn by the end?

## **Reading 2: The Case of the Vanishing Markers**

Nora loved art. She had a special drawer with pens, markers, colored pencils, and exactly one red fine-tip marker that was her favorite.

One day, she sat down to draw a cardinal, but the red marker was missing.

“That’s weird,” she said.

She checked the drawer. Her art box. The cracks in the table. Under the dog. Gone.

This continued for three days. Every time she needed the red marker, it disappeared.

Finally, she spotted a trail of red dots on the carpet.

Following them like a detective, she found a shoebox under her brother’s bed.

Inside: stick figure comics drawn on index cards. In red. All red.

Nora stood in the doorway and held up the box. “Do these belong to someone who borrowed my marker without asking?”

Her little brother grinned sheepishly. “I was going to tell you... after Chapter Twelve.”

Nora gave him a blue marker and took back the red one.

“If I disappear during your art block,” he said, “it’s because I’m building a storyline.”

Nora laughed. “Next time, ask the artist first.”

### **Questions:**

1. What item kept disappearing from Nora’s art supplies?
2. What clues helped her figure out what was happening?
3. Where did she find the missing item?
4. What was her brother using it for?
5. How did they resolve the problem?

## Grade 5 – Week 11

### Reading 1: The Pancake Measurement Mishap

Lila was determined to make breakfast without help. It was part of her new homeschool challenge: “Independent Life Skills Week.” She’d already watered the plants and vacuumed the hallway. Now, it was time for pancakes.

She pulled out the recipe card and read the instructions carefully—mostly. Flour, eggs, milk, sugar, baking powder. And then, she saw it: “1 tbsp cinnamon.”

But in her sleepy morning brain, she read it as “1 TONS cinnamon.”

“Seems like a lot,” she muttered, “but maybe this is a very cinnamon-y recipe.”

She added a heaping scoop. Then another.

She stirred the batter, poured it on the skillet, and waited. The first pancake smelled... interesting. The second one looked darker than usual. The third one smoked a little.

Her dad came into the kitchen and sniffed the air. “Is something... burning?”

Lila smiled proudly. “Nope! Just experimenting with flavor.”

When they all sat down to eat, her mom took one bite and paused.

“Lila, did you use... pepper?”

“No!” she said, insulted. “Cinnamon.”

Her brother pointed to the container. “That’s cumin.”

Lila froze. “Wait... I didn’t use the cinnamon jar?”

They all burst out laughing. Her mom toasted bagels instead, and her dad said, “Best breakfast adventure ever.”

Later, Lila labeled every spice jar in huge black letters and wrote in her homeschool journal: *Today I learned the difference between cinnamon and cumin... and why pancakes should not smell like tacos.*

### Questions:

1. What challenge was Lila working on for homeschool?
2. What mistake did she make with the pancakes?
3. How did her family react to the unusual flavor?
4. What ingredient did she accidentally use instead of cinnamon?
5. What did Lila do afterward to prevent future mistakes?

## **Reading 2: The Time Capsule Trouble (Extended Version)**

Last spring, Ezra and his homeschool group buried a time capsule in the backyard. It had everything: letters to their future selves, drawings, funny photos, and a Lego figure dressed like George Washington.

Now it was time to dig it up.

They were excited. They brought shovels, snacks, and a speaker blasting theme music from a treasure hunting movie.

There was just one problem.

No one remembered exactly where they buried it.

"I'm pretty sure it was near the compost bin," said Jonah.

"No," Ezra argued. "It was next to the swing set."

"It was under the trampoline!" Lila insisted.

They dug five different holes.

Eventually, someone stepped on a soft patch behind the shed. Digging there, they hit something hard.

The box.

They cheered and opened it.

Inside, everything was slightly damp, smelled like compost, and the Lego figure's hat had melted into a lump.

But they didn't care.

They laughed over their old predictions (one kid thought he'd be a llama trainer by now) and shared the drawings that had turned slightly green.

"History is weird," Jonah said.

"But awesome," Ezra added.

They decided to bury a new one—and this time, they put a flag over it, a rock, and a printed map.

Plus, a sticky note that said: "Don't trust your future memory."

### **Questions:**

What did Ezra and his friends bury the year before?

What was the problem when they went to dig it up?

Where did they finally find the time capsule?

What was the condition of the items inside?

What did they do differently with the new capsule?

## Grade 5 – Week 12

### Reading 1: The Great Zoom Freeze (Extended Version)

Sophie had dressed up, fixed her hair, and positioned her art project just right on the table behind her. Her homeschool co-op Zoom class was about to begin, and she was excited to present her diorama of “Life in Ancient Egypt.”

As the teacher called on her, she began confidently. “My project shows how ancient Egyptians built homes using mud bricks and—”

Freeze.

Not just a pause. A full-on, camera-frozen, internet crash of doom.

On her end, everything seemed fine. But her classmates were staring at her frozen smile, eyes wide, mouth open mid-word like she was singing opera in slow motion.

The chat lit up:

“Sophie’s frozen!”

“She looks like she saw a mummy!”

“Quick, someone take a screenshot!”

Sophie kept talking, completely unaware, until her mom called out from the hallway, “The internet is down!”

When the screen unfroze five minutes later, she came back to a wall of giggles and applause.

Her teacher smiled. “You gave the most memorable presentation of the day—even without sound.”

Sophie turned the screenshot into a meme that said: *Ancient Egypt: So shocking, it broke the internet.*

And yes, she finished her presentation the next day—with the router sitting right next to her laptop.

### Questions:

1. What was Sophie presenting during her Zoom class?
2. What happened in the middle of her presentation?
3. How did her classmates react to the freeze?
4. What did Sophie do with the funny screenshot?
5. How did she handle the situation afterward?

## Reading 2: The Kitchen Band Rehearsal (Extended Version)

It started because Jonah's guitar string broke.

Music class was supposed to start at 10:00, and his plan was to perform a short song for the weekly homeschool showcase. But with a broken string and no replacements, Jonah decided to get creative.

"I'll make a new band," he said.

A kitchen band.

He dragged out pots, pans, wooden spoons, and an empty cereal box. His sister joined in with a bag of rice as a shaker, and his little brother added backup vocals that sounded more like yodeling.

They called themselves "The Spoon Siblings."

Practice was... energetic.

Their mom walked in carrying laundry and stopped in the doorway as a frying pan crashed to the floor.

"Is this noise... educational?"

Jonah stood tall behind a colander drum set. "We're learning rhythm and coordination. Technically, this is science of sound."

They performed their debut hit, *Funky Fork Fiesta*, for their dad when he came home. He clapped, laughed, and donated a spatula to the cause.

They decided every Friday would be Kitchen Band Rehearsal Day—if everyone agreed to help clean up afterward.

"Next week," Jonah said, "we go unplugged."

"Please," said his mom, "make it literally unplugged."

### Questions:

1. Why did Jonah have to come up with a new plan for music class?
2. What instruments did the kids use?
3. What did their mom think of the kitchen band?
4. How did their dad respond?
5. What new family tradition was born from this experiment?

## Grade 5 – Week 13

### Reading 1: The Backyard Tent Challenge

Caleb had a plan. For his homeschool “Life Skills” unit, he was going to sleep outside in the backyard for three nights in a row. Alone.

“It’ll build resilience,” he told his family, setting up the old pop-up tent and testing the zipper five times.

He brought a flashlight, trail mix, three books, a notebook, and exactly one sock puppet for entertainment.

Night one started great. Until the neighbor’s cat ran across the tent and made it shake like a ghost was pounding on it. Caleb screamed, dropped his trail mix, and spent ten minutes convincing himself it wasn’t a raccoon uprising.

Night two, the wind picked up and the flap kept smacking him in the face. He tied it with a shoelace, only to hear a chorus of frogs singing backup vocals all night.

By night three, he had mastered flashlight origami, learned how to roll up in a blanket like a burrito, and was surprisingly cozy—until it started to rain.

Caleb dragged the entire tent, still upright, onto the porch and finished the night there.

The next morning, he told his mom, “I slept outside for three nights... if the porch counts.”

She laughed. “You get full credit—for effort, bravery, and burrito technique.”

### Questions:

1. What was Caleb’s goal for his homeschool project?
2. What problems did he face each night?
3. How did he adapt to the challenges?
4. Where did he finish the final night?
5. What did his mom say about his efforts?

## **Reading 2: The Invisible Ink Disaster**

Layla had been reading spy novels for her literature unit and decided to make her own secret message with lemon juice and a cotton swab.

She wrote: *TOP SECRET: THE COOKIES ARE HIDDEN IN THE BREADBOX*

Then she used the toaster to reveal it.

Except... she got too close.

The paper turned brown. Then a corner caught fire. She blew it out quickly and fanned it with a magazine.

Her mom walked in just as she was waving smoke out of the kitchen.

“What’s going on?”

“Science,” Layla said calmly. “Also literature. And a little bit of survival skills.”

Later, after the smell cleared, they tested new methods using a hairdryer instead.

Layla ended up writing a full report on invisible ink, including “Lessons Learned: Don’t Toast the Secrets.”

She included diagrams, safety tips, and a backup cookie recipe just in case her brother decoded the original message.

### **Questions:**

1. What inspired Layla to try invisible ink?
2. What materials did she use?
3. What went wrong during the experiment?
4. How did her mom respond?
5. What did Layla include in her final report?

## Grade 5 – Week 14

### Reading 1: The DIY Bookcase Collapse

Jonah’s mom told him he could redesign the homeschool corner for a “practical geometry” lesson.

He watched two how-to videos, measured with a tape measure (plus his foot), and sketched plans for a brand-new bookcase made from cardboard boxes, hot glue, and imagination.

“It’s about angles and balance,” he explained confidently.

He stacked four boxes, glued them, and even decorated each level with washi tape and a name: “Top Shelf of Glory,” “Science Zone,” “Snack Stash,” and “Secret Stuff.”

It stood proudly—until he added the math textbook.

The whole thing leaned like a tired giraffe and then collapsed in slow motion, spilling markers and a half-eaten granola bar onto the rug.

Jonah stared at the mess. “So that’s why engineers use screws.”

His mom walked in, clapped gently, and said, “Congratulations. You now know more than when you started.”

They rebuilt it together using real shelves—and Jonah renamed the top one: “Lessons from Failure.”

### Questions:

1. What project was Jonah working on?
2. What materials did he use for his bookcase?
3. What caused the collapse?
4. What lesson did Jonah learn?
5. What did he rename the top shelf?

## **Reading 2: The Slow Motion History Play**

Lila and her siblings were asked to perform a skit for their homeschool group's Colonial America study.

They chose to reenact the Boston Tea Party. Lila was the narrator, her little brother played the British guard, and her older sister was a dramatic colonist with too much flair.

Rehearsal went smoothly... until they got excited during the final performance. The colonists threw the "tea"—brown construction paper—in slow motion. Like, super slow.

One paper took fifteen seconds to land. Her brother, trying to stay in character, froze so hard he blinked only once the entire time.

The audience (parents and a dozen kids on folding chairs) burst out laughing. By the end, the "British Guard" was sipping real tea and the narrator ad-libbed, "And that's how America learned to brew comedy."

The teacher called it "historically hilarious" and gave them a ribbon for Most Theatrical Delivery.

### **Questions:**

1. What event were Lila and her siblings reenacting?
2. What roles did they play in the skit?
3. What made the performance so funny?
4. How did the audience react?
5. What award did they receive?

## Grade 5 – Week 15

### Reading 1: The Wrong Zoom Room

Ezra was ready for co-op math tutoring. He logged into Zoom ten minutes early, notebook open, pencil sharpened, and even had a glass of water with ice cubes that clinked like a professional.

He clicked the link, saw a few familiar names, and waited.

Then someone said, “Welcome to Introduction to Poetry!”

Ezra blinked. He was in the wrong class.

Before he could leave, the teacher called on him. “Would you like to read the next stanza?”

Panicked, Ezra read something about dandelions and destiny in his deepest voice.

When he finally logged into math, his tutor said, “You’re late.”

Ezra replied, “I was temporarily a poet. It was intense.”

Later, he got an email invite to join the poetry group full-time. He still hasn’t answered it.

### Questions:

1. What class was Ezra trying to attend?
2. What mistake did he make?
3. How did he handle being called on in the wrong class?
4. What did he tell his math tutor?
5. What happened after the class ended?

## **Reading 2: The Mystery Muffin Bake-Off**

Sophie was in charge of snacks for the homeschool group park day. She decided to bake muffins—banana chocolate chip.

Everything was going great... until she realized she grabbed salt instead of sugar.

But she didn't notice until her friends took the first bite.

There was silence. Then her friend Nora said, "This tastes like banana soup... but angrier."

Sophie apologized, laughed, and promised a better batch next week.

They turned it into a baking lesson right there at the park. The kids voted, and the muffins were renamed "Mystery Muffins of Doom."

Someone even made a fake commercial with a dramatic voice: "Do you like muffins? Do you like confusion? Try ours!"

Sophie took it all in stride. "Next week," she said, "I'm labeling everything. Twice."

### **Questions:**

1. What kind of muffins did Sophie try to make?
2. What mistake did she make while baking?
3. How did her friends react?
4. What did they rename the muffins?
5. What did Sophie plan to do differently next time?

## Grade 5 – Week 16

### Reading 1: The Worm Farm Experiment

Micah’s homeschool science project was to build a mini worm farm.

He gathered a glass jar, dirt, newspaper strips, apple peels, and most importantly—worms, which he found after a rainstorm.

He named them. Wormando, Wiggles, Slimothy, and Beyoncé.

Things went great for three days. The worms moved around. The dirt shifted. The kids were fascinated.

Until the jar tipped.

Worms. Everywhere. On the table. On the rug. Near the toaster.

Micah froze. “SOMEONE HELP BEYONCÉ!”

His mom walked in, stared at the situation, and calmly handed him a glove.

“Collect your scientists and put them back in their lab, please.”

They rebuilt the farm with a lid this time and wrote a reflection titled *Worm Management 101*.

Micah added: “Next time, I’m raising snails. They’re slower.”

### Questions:

1. What was Micah’s science project?
2. What did he name some of the worms?
3. What caused the worm emergency?
4. How did his mom respond to the chaos?
5. What did he write in his project reflection?

## **Reading 2: The Stuck-In-The-Hammock Incident**

Lila was supposed to be reading outside for homeschool. She climbed into the family's backyard hammock with her book, a notebook, and a bottle of lemonade. It was all going so well—until she dropped her pencil.

She leaned out too far and tipped sideways. One leg caught in the ropes, and she ended up twisted like spaghetti in a swinging, squeaky tangle.

Her brother came out and stared. "Are you... stuck?"

"I'm READING!" she shouted.

He laughed so hard he forgot to help.

She finally untangled herself and finished the chapter sitting on the grass with a new motto: "Some books are too wild for hammocks."

Her mom made her bookmark that quote for later.

### **Questions:**

1. What was Lila doing outside?
2. What caused her to fall?
3. How did her brother respond?
4. What did Lila say while stuck?
5. What was her new reading motto?

## Grade 5 – Week 17

### ***Reading 1: The Great Chair Race***

Jonah and his siblings had just finished their homeschool lessons for the morning when their mom stepped outside to take a phone call. That’s when it happened.

One moment, Jonah was spinning in a rolling chair. The next, his sister Lila was racing him down the hallway in another chair yelling, “First to the kitchen wins!”

Their little brother Micah joined with a laundry basket and scooted along using oven mitts on his hands. It was chaos.

Chairs bumped into walls. A pencil cup went flying. Someone ran over a sock and slid sideways into the couch.

Just as Lila declared herself the winner, their mom walked in. Silence.

She stared. They froze.

Then she said, “Next time, at least wear helmets.”

Later, Jonah made a scoreboard, Micah designed a flag, and Lila wrote the official “Chair Race Rules,” including: *No racing during math time and absolutely NO racing over the dog.*

#### **Questions:**

1. What unexpected game did the kids invent?
2. What started the race?
3. Who joined using a laundry basket?
4. What was their mom’s reaction?
5. What new rules were added afterward?

## Reading 2: The Spelling Bee Mix-Up

Lila loved spelling. Her mom often gave her fun challenges like writing silly sentences using hard words or spelling words backward.

So when the family decided to hold a “Homeschool Living Room Spelling Bee,” she was ready.

The first few rounds were easy. Words like “elephant,” “giraffe,” and “pancake.” Then her dad called out a tricky one: “ravioli.”

Lila froze. “Is that even English?”

Jonah spelled it with a ‘w.’ Micah said “r-a-v-y-o-l-e-e.” Her mom laughed so hard she nearly fell off the couch.

Lila spelled it right and won a glittery bookmark as the grand prize.

The next day, they made ravioli for dinner—and Jonah labeled it “Rav-e-oh-lee” on the fridge.

“Spelling,” Lila said, “tastes better when you win.”

### Questions:

1. What activity did the family do together?
2. What kind of words were used in the spelling bee?
3. What was the tricky word that stumped everyone?
4. Who spelled it correctly?
5. What was the prize and how did they celebrate later?

## Grade 5 – Week 18

### ***Reading 1: The Sock Puppet History Report***

Micah was supposed to give a short history presentation on explorers. He had planned to talk about Lewis and Clark—but he forgot. Until the morning of.

So, he panicked. Then he got creative.

He grabbed two old socks, glued on some googly eyes, and wrote “Lewis” and “Clark” on sticky notes.

When it was his turn on Zoom, he popped into view and said in a squeaky voice, “Hi, I’m Lewis. I explored the West!” The other sock added, “And I’m Clark! We had a dog named Seaman who was very good at sniffing plants.”

His teacher blinked, then laughed. “That was... unique.”

Micah ended the presentation with the sock puppets giving each other a high five and saying, “Adventure complete!”

Afterward, his mom suggested maybe starting projects *before* breakfast next time.

Micah nodded. “But admit it—those socks were iconic.”

#### **Questions:**

1. What was Micah’s presentation about?
2. What did he forget until the last minute?
3. What creative solution did he come up with?
4. How did his teacher react?
5. What did Micah learn afterward?

## ***Reading 2: The Sticky Note Math Mayhem***

Sophie didn't love math, but she loved sticky notes. So when her mom suggested a new way to practice multiplication facts, Sophie got excited.

They wrote multiplication problems on sticky notes and stuck them all over the living room.

The rules: Run to a note, solve it, and shout the answer. If you got it right, you got to move to the next. If not, five jumping jacks.

It started off fine. Then Jonah joined and tried to make it into a ninja course. Micah ran face-first into a lampshade while solving  $6 \times 7$ . Sophie got tangled in the curtains.

Their mom walked in just as Sophie shouted "42!" while dangling upside down off the couch.

She paused, blinked, and said, "Well. At least you're learning."

By the end of the game, they were sweaty, laughing, and had memorized every fact from the six times table.

"Best math class ever," Sophie said, sticking a note on her forehead that read: " $12 \times 12 = \text{Champion.}$ "

### **Questions:**

1. What unusual tool did Sophie use to study math?
2. How did they turn it into a game?
3. What happened when Jonah and Micah joined?
4. What did their mom say about the chaos?
5. What math facts did they memorize by the end?

## **Grade 5 – Week 19**

### ***Reading 1: The Homemade Raft Race***

Ezra's family lived near a small pond. When he saw a flyer for the homeschool group's "Anything-That-Floats Raft Race," he knew exactly what to do. He recruited his best friend Noah, and together they planned a raft built from empty milk jugs, duct tape, and an old sled. They named it "The Unsinkable Sandwich."

The morning of the race, Ezra wore swim trunks and a bicycle helmet "for safety." Noah brought snacks. Their raft floated... for exactly thirty-seven seconds.

It leaned. It creaked. Then it tipped slowly, gently, as if to say, "Nope."

The boys fell in with a splash and surfaced laughing. Other families paddled past in pool noodles, inflatable flamingos, and one kayak disguised as a dragon.

In the end, "The Unsinkable Sandwich" came in last—but won the "Most Creative Sinking" award.

Ezra told his mom, "It floated just long enough to be a success."

#### **Questions:**

1. What kind of event did Ezra and Noah enter?
2. What materials did they use to build their raft?
3. How long did their raft float?
4. What was the raft's name?
5. What award did they win?

## ***Reading 2: The Mystery of the Missing Flashcards***

Lila had a big quiz coming up in homeschool science, and she made a stack of colorful flashcards to study. Each one had a question about the human body on one side and the answer on the back. She was proud of them and kept them in a plastic case by her books.

Then they disappeared.

She searched the dining table, the school shelf, the laundry pile, and even the freezer—just in case. Nothing.

Her brother Micah walked in wearing a cardboard helmet and holding a plastic shield.

“Have you seen my flashcards?” Lila asked.

He grinned and opened his shield. Inside were all her flashcards, taped around the edges. “They were armor in my Battle of the Brain Warriors,” he said.

Lila stared. “You used my human anatomy set... as armor?”

“Educational protection,” Micah replied.

They spent the next hour retaping the cards and quizzing each other. By the time they were done, both of them had memorized all the answers.

### **Questions:**

1. What were the flashcards about?
2. Where did Lila originally store them?
3. Who had taken the flashcards?
4. What did he use them for?
5. What was the unexpected result?

## **Grade 5 – Week 20**

### ***Reading 1: The Cereal Box Catapult***

During their homeschool co-op's STEM week, students were asked to build simple machines. Jonah was excited. He watched videos, sketched designs, and gathered his supplies: rubber bands, pencils, tape, a plastic spoon, and the back of a cereal box.

"It's a lever," he explained, aiming his invention at a paper cup. "With flair."

He placed a mini marshmallow in the spoon and launched it across the table. It bounced off a chair, hit the wall, and landed in his mom's coffee mug.

"Target acquired," Jonah said dramatically.

He spent the next hour adjusting angles and launching raisins, cereal pieces, and one brave gummy bear. His sister joined in and built a marshmallow shield.

At the showcase, Jonah's machine didn't win "Most Accurate," but it did win "Most Delicious Project."

Later, his dad walked in and saw the mess. "So this is engineering?"

Jonah nodded. "And also lunch."

#### **Questions:**

1. What type of machine did Jonah build?
2. What materials did he use?
3. What happened when he tested it?
4. What award did his project win?
5. What did Jonah say at the end?

## ***Reading 2: The Surprise Cake Explosion***

Sophie was learning fractions through baking. Her assignment: double the recipe for her grandma's chocolate cake. She did the math, wrote it down, and followed every step... or so she thought.

She added flour, sugar, eggs, cocoa, and butter. But she forgot to double the baking pans. She poured everything into one big pan and placed it in the oven with confidence.

Twenty minutes later, the smell was heavenly—but the oven was not.

The cake bubbled over, spilling thick batter onto the racks and turning into chocolate lava. Smoke curled out of the door. Her mom opened the oven and gasped. Sophie blinked through the haze and said, "I think I created a dessert volcano."

They turned off the oven, cleaned the mess, and scraped up some edges to taste. It was surprisingly good.

Later, Sophie rewrote her recipe card and added a bold note: "Never ignore pan size math."

### **Questions:**

1. What school subject was Sophie combining with baking?
2. What mistake did she make with the recipe?
3. What happened in the oven?
4. How did her mom respond?
5. What did Sophie write on her recipe card?

## **Grade 5 – Week 21**

### ***Reading 1: The Reading Fort Rules***

Liam had one goal: build the ultimate reading fort. His mom said he could count it as “creative design” for school, as long as it didn’t collapse on anyone.

He gathered chairs, blankets, pillows, clothespins, and string lights. He hung a sign outside that said, “Authorized Readers Only.”

Inside the fort was magical. There were snacks, flashlights, and a beanbag throne. He even installed a secret knock. His sister, Zoe, begged to come in.

“Only if you pass the Reading Quiz,” he declared.

She passed—barely. Then their little brother crawled in with sticky hands and sat on a cracker.

Liam sighed, opened the flap, and changed the sign: “Authorized Readers AND Crumb Creators Welcome.”

By the end of the day, they all curled up and read comic books together.

#### **Questions:**

1. What did Liam build?
2. What rule did he make for entering the fort?
3. What did his sister have to do to join?
4. What changed the rules later?
5. How did they end the day?

## ***Reading 2: The Chicken Nugget Science Project***

Micah was supposed to come up with a science fair topic. His mom suggested weather. His dad suggested magnets. Micah chose something else: "What happens when you microwave a chicken nugget for too long?"

He made a chart. He took notes. He even drew before-and-after pictures. The first nugget was perfect. The second? A little crispy. The third? Charred into a fossilized chicken rock.

When his mom smelled the smoke, she opened the microwave and stared at the blackened nugget.

"Was this part of the plan?" she asked.

"Science," Micah replied. "Also, I don't recommend eating Nugget Number Three."

He wrote a final report titled *Microwave Mayhem* and included a warning: "Do not attempt at home unless supervised and very hungry."

### **Questions:**

1. What unusual science project did Micah choose?
2. How did he test his experiment?
3. What happened to the third nugget?
4. What did his mom say when she saw it?
5. What was the title of his report?

## **Grade 5 – Week 22**

### ***Reading 1: The Board Game That Lasted All Day***

Jonah found an old board game in the closet called “Adventure Quest: The Never-Ending Map.” He brought it to the homeschool table and convinced his siblings to play.

The game had cards, tokens, a six-page rulebook, and a map that folded out like a scroll. It took twenty minutes just to sort the pieces.

By hour two, they had each battled trolls, gathered treasure, and argued about the rules. Their mom brought them sandwiches, and they kept playing.

By hour five, they had built alliances, lost treasure, regained treasure, and forgotten who was winning.

At bedtime, their dad walked in and asked, “Still playing?”

“We’re close to rescuing the Golden Dragon Egg,” Jonah said. “Only twenty-seven more spaces to go.”

They left the game set up overnight on a “Do Not Touch” table and continued it the next day.

“I think we just turned this into a history unit,” Jonah said proudly.

#### **Questions:**

1. What kind of board game did Jonah find?
2. How long did they play the game?
3. What kept them going?
4. How did their parents support them?
5. What did Jonah say at the end?

## ***Reading 2: The Great Glue Stick Mix-Up***

Lila was working on her homeschool art project—an animal habitat collage. She had paper trees, sandpaper for a desert, cotton ball clouds, and tiny paper penguins.

She reached for the glue stick and started attaching everything. But nothing stuck. In fact, the paper looked shinier by the second.

That's when she realized it wasn't glue. It was her mom's lip balm.

She stared at her penguin sliding off a cotton ball cloud and groaned. Her brother walked by and whispered, "Smells like vanilla frosting in here."

They laughed, remade the background, and this time used actual glue. The second version turned out even better—and smelled less like a bakery.

### **Questions:**

1. What project was Lila working on?
2. What mistake did she make with the supplies?
3. How did she realize something was wrong?
4. What did her brother say about the smell?
5. How did the second version of the project turn out?

## **Grade 5 – Week 23**

### ***Reading 1: The Great Sock Sorting Showdown***

Lila’s mom decided it was time for everyone to help with laundry. So she turned a boring chore into a challenge: The Great Sock Sorting Showdown.

Each kid got a basket of clean laundry and five minutes on the clock. Whoever matched the most sock pairs won a prize—extra screen time.

Lila took this seriously. She studied the piles, scanned for stripes and patterns, and arranged her socks by color.

Her brother Jonah did not.

He made a sock puppet instead and spent most of the time talking in a pirate voice: “Arrr, where be me left foot cover?”

By the end of five minutes, Lila had matched 23 pairs. Jonah had one and a sock pirate.

Their little sister won by accident after dumping her pile and discovering it was already matched.

Lila still got her screen time. Jonah performed a puppet show. And their mom declared, “Best laundry day ever.”

#### **Questions:**

1. What task did the kids help with?
2. How did their mom make it fun?
3. What did Lila do to win?
4. What was Jonah doing instead?
5. How did the family end the day?

## ***Reading 2: The Accidental Dog Treat Taste Test***

Ezra was helping his mom unpack groceries when he spotted a box that said “Chicken Biscuits.” Thinking it was a new snack, he opened it and took a bite.

The texture was weird. The flavor was... dry.

“Mom,” he said, mouth full. “These are terrible!”

She turned around and looked at the box. “Ezra! Those are for the dog!”

He spit the rest into the trash and drank half a cup of milk straight from the carton.

Later, he made a new rule for himself: *Always check the fine print.*

And his mom added labels to the cabinet: “People Food” and “Not for Human Consumption.”

The dog didn’t mind. She got a fresh treat and a good laugh—at least, it looked like she was laughing.

### **Questions:**

1. What mistake did Ezra make?
2. What made him think the food was for people?
3. How did his mom react?
4. What did Ezra do after realizing his mistake?
5. What new system did they create to prevent it again?

## **Grade 5 – Week 24**

### ***Reading 1: The Lemonade Stand Reboot***

Sophie and her best friend Ava had tried running a lemonade stand the summer before, but it didn't go well. The sign melted in the rain, the lemonade was too sour, and one cup had a bug in it.

This year, they came back stronger.

They made a waterproof sign, used filtered water, and even had a price list. "Lemonade: \$1. Lemonade with a smile: \$2."

The weather was perfect, the lemonade was sweet, and Ava's little brother passed out flyers like a professional.

After a slow start, people started stopping. They made \$15 in two hours, which they spent immediately on matching sunglasses and ice cream.

"It's not just about the money," Sophie said. "It's about learning and looking cool."

Their parents agreed—this was definitely better than last year's Bug Beverage Disaster.

#### **Questions:**

1. What business did Sophie and Ava try to run again?
2. What problems did they have the first time?
3. What changes did they make this time?
4. How did they promote their stand?
5. What did they do with the money they earned?

## ***Reading 2: The Giant Binder Explosion***

Micah was organizing his homeschool binder. He had subjects separated with dividers: math, science, history, reading, and random doodles that somehow lived in every section.

His mom reminded him to “keep it tidy so it doesn’t explode again.”

“I got this,” he said.

He tried to stuff thirty pages of loose worksheets into one pocket. It didn’t fit. He forced it anyway.

Ten minutes later, the binder snapped open, papers shot across the table like fireworks, and a science test from two months ago flew into the fish tank.

Micah stood still. “Technically, that’s a water experiment now.”

His mom handed him a zipper folder. “You’re being promoted to an upgraded storage system.”

Micah nodded. “Finally. I’ve reached advanced level organization.”

### **Questions:**

1. What was Micah trying to organize?
2. What caused the binder to explode?
3. What happened to one of his old science tests?
4. How did his mom fix the problem?
5. What did Micah say at the end?

## **Grade 5 – Week 25**

### ***Reading 1: The Great Backyard Zucchini Escape***

Sophie’s family had a garden, and her mom was very proud of the zucchini patch. But Sophie... was not. By August, it felt like every meal included zucchini. Zucchini bread, zucchini noodles, grilled zucchini, even zucchini smoothies. Sophie couldn’t take it anymore.

So she came up with a secret plan: Operation Z.E. (Zucchini Evacuation).

She hid one under her bed (bad idea), one inside her brother’s toy bin (he tattled), and tried giving one to the mail carrier (“Ma’am, I’m allergic”). Finally, she snuck a zucchini into her dad’s lunchbox.

At dinner, he pulled it out and said, “So... is this dessert?”

Sophie confessed. Her mom laughed so hard she cried and handed her a new challenge: create a new recipe using zucchini that didn’t taste like zucchini.

The next day, Sophie made double chocolate zucchini muffins—and they were amazing.

“I still don’t like vegetables,” she said, “but I do like hiding them in cocoa.”

#### **Questions:**

1. Why was Sophie tired of zucchini?
2. What were some of the places she tried to hide it?
3. What did her dad find in his lunchbox?
4. What challenge did her mom give her?
5. What recipe did Sophie invent?

## ***Reading 2: The Case of the Bouncing Egg***

Micah was excited about his homeschool science experiment: make an egg bounce by soaking it in vinegar for three days. He read all about the chemical reaction—how vinegar breaks down the shell and leaves behind a rubbery membrane.

Day one: the egg fizzed in the jar. Success.

Day two: he held it up with a spoon. Still squishy.

Day three: he removed it, grinned, and announced, “Time to bounce!”

His mom warned, “Start low.”

He dropped it from one inch. It bounced.

He dropped it from three inches. Still good.

Then he got confident and dropped it from the counter.

*SPLAT.*

The egg exploded like a vinegar grenade. Yolky goo hit the cabinet and ran down his leg.

Micah stood frozen.

“Well,” he said. “That concludes my experiment.”

They cleaned it up and wrote a summary titled: *How Not to Bounce an Egg: A Cautionary Tale.*

### **Questions:**

1. What was Micah trying to do for his science experiment?
2. How did the egg change after being in vinegar?
3. What happened when he dropped it from the counter?
4. What did he say after the mess?
5. What was the title of his experiment report?

## Grade 5 – Week 26

### *Reading 1: The DIY Weather Station That Didn't Know What Season It Was*

Ezra wanted to build a weather station for his homeschool science unit. He made a rain gauge from a water bottle, a wind vane from a straw and a pencil, and a thermometer taped to a yardstick.

“It’s time for real data,” he declared.

On day one, it rained inside the gauge—but also inside the dog’s water bowl, so his little sister got confused and poured one into the other. “For accuracy,” she said.

On day two, the wind vane spun wildly... because their cat was batting it like a toy.

By day three, the thermometer read 104°F. Ezra panicked until he realized it was sitting in full sun, next to the grill.

He took a deep breath, moved everything, and started over.

Two weeks later, his readings were more accurate, and he made a chart to track patterns.

“It doesn’t just tell the weather,” he said. “It tells the story of my backyard.”

#### **Questions:**

1. What did Ezra build for his science project?
2. What went wrong with the rain gauge?
3. Why didn’t the wind vane work properly?
4. What happened with the thermometer?
5. What did Ezra learn from the experience?

## ***Reading 2: The Pancake-to-Floor Flip Disaster***

Lila wanted to make pancakes by herself for breakfast as part of her "cooking skills" week. She measured the flour, cracked the eggs without getting shells in the bowl, and even used cinnamon. So far, so good.

Then came the flip.

She lifted the spatula confidently. The pancake flipped... and flew across the kitchen.

It landed half on the dog, half on the floor.

The dog licked it happily. Lila groaned.

She tried again. The next one folded in half mid-air and stuck to the side of the toaster.

The third one? Perfect.

By the end of the morning, there were more pancakes on plates than anywhere else, and Lila had invented a new rule:

"One pancake per launch attempt."

Her mom gave her a high five. "You earned the syrup."

### **Questions:**

1. What skill was Lila practicing?
2. What happened during her first flip?
3. Where did the second pancake land?
4. How did she eventually succeed?
5. What new rule did she come up with?

## **Grade 5 – Week 27**

### ***Reading 1: The Solar Oven S'mores***

Jonah's homeschool group had a challenge: make something using solar power. Most kids made models or posters, but Jonah went for snacks. He built a solar oven from a pizza box, foil, plastic wrap, and tape.

He placed a graham cracker, chocolate square, and marshmallow inside, angled the flap, and waited.

Thirty minutes later, the chocolate had melted but the marshmallow was still stubbornly shaped like a cold pillow.

Jonah aimed a mirror at it. Nothing.

He moved the whole box to the driveway. Still slow.

Just as he was about to give up, the marshmallow softened into a gooey cloud.

He closed the lid, pressed the crackers together, and took a bite.

"Sun-powered dessert," he said proudly.

His dad nodded. "Science never tasted so good."

#### **Questions:**

1. What kind of project did Jonah make?
2. What materials did he use to build it?
3. What happened with the marshmallow?
4. How did Jonah finally get it to soften?
5. What did he say after trying the s'more?

## ***Reading 2: The Bird Watching Blunder***

Naomi was doing a nature study and chose bird watching for the week. She sat on the porch with binoculars, a notebook, and a peanut butter sandwich.

She spotted a robin, a blue jay, and something she thought might be a hawk (turned out it was a squirrel's tail blowing in the wind).

Then came the surprise.

A bird flew onto the porch railing, looked Naomi in the eye... and snatched her sandwich.

It took off in a blur of feathers and peanut butter.

Naomi stared, speechless, then wrote in her journal:

*Species: Sandwich Hawk. Rare. Bold. Prefers crunchy.*

### **Questions:**

1. What activity was Naomi doing for her nature study?
2. What tools did she bring with her?
3. What did she mistake for a hawk?
4. What unexpected thing happened?
5. What did she write in her journal?

## Grade 5 – Week 28

### *Reading 1: The Giant Bubble Fail*

Sophie saw a video online about making giant bubbles with a homemade wand. She mixed the special soap solution: dish soap, water, cornstarch, baking powder, and one secret ingredient—glycerin. She wasn't sure what glycerin was, but her mom ordered it.

She made a wand from straws and yarn, dipped it in the bucket, and ran across the yard.

Nothing. Just a sad trail of soap drips.

She tried again. Still no bubble.

Her brother added more water. Her mom added less. Her dad walked out, dipped it once, and produced a bubble the size of a watermelon.

Sophie stared. "Okay, what? Are you a bubble whisperer?"

Turns out, the wind needed to be just right.

The next morning, she got it. A bubble so big it wobbled like a balloon and floated over the fence.

Success—and only two spills, one splash to the face, and a bubble that landed on the dog.

Totally worth it.

#### **Questions:**

1. What project was Sophie trying to do?
2. What ingredients were in the bubble mix?
3. What went wrong at first?
4. Who finally got a big bubble to work?
5. What did Sophie learn about making giant bubbles?

## ***Reading 2: The DIY Comic Book Club***

Micah loved comic books. So he started a homeschool “Comic Creators Club” with his siblings. Rule #1: Everyone had to write and draw their own comic. Rule #2: Sound effects required.

Micah’s story was about a superhero cat named Thunder Whiskers. His sister made a story about dancing llamas in space. His little brother made a comic with two pages of scribbles and a ketchup stain.

They shared their stories on Friday, complete with dramatic readings. Micah read, “BOOM! CRASH! MEOWWW!” while wearing a towel as a cape.

They laughed so hard they cried, then made a plan to meet every week.

“Education,” Micah said, “comes in many forms. Especially in full color.”

### **Questions:**

1. What club did Micah start?
2. What rules did the club have?
3. What were some of the comic story ideas?
4. How did they share their work?
5. What did Micah say about education?

## Grade 5 – Week 29

### Reading 1: The Great Homeschool Bake-Off

It started with a bet. Jonah told his sister Lila that his banana muffins were better than hers. She laughed and challenged him to a “Bake-Off.” Their mom turned it into a homeschool assignment—math, science, home economics, and sibling rivalry all rolled into one.

They each picked a recipe. Jonah made banana muffins with chocolate chips. Lila made blueberry-lemon ones with a sprinkle of sugar on top. They measured ingredients, preheated the oven, and put sticky notes on their bowls: “Do not sabotage.”

While the muffins baked, the kitchen smelled like heaven—and chaos. Jonah forgot to clean the counters. Lila dropped a spoon into the batter. Their little brother Micah walked through and tried to taste both.

Finally, it was time for judging. Mom, Dad, and Grandma tried each muffin and gave compliments, then tried to avoid choosing a winner.

“They’re both excellent,” Grandma said.

Lila narrowed her eyes. “You like mine better, don’t you?”

“I like not being caught in the middle,” Grandma replied.

In the end, they declared a tie. Jonah and Lila agreed to keep baking together every Friday—and to never involve Grandma again.

#### Questions:

1. What challenge did Jonah and Lila take on?
2. What subjects did their mom say it covered?
3. What kind of muffins did each sibling make?
4. Who judged the contest?
5. What was the final outcome?

## **Reading 2: The Chicken Coop Chronicles**

Ezra's family didn't live on a farm, but his mom had always dreamed of having chickens. So one spring, they built a backyard chicken coop and brought home four fluffy chicks named Nugget, Scramble, Drumstick, and Lady Featherbottom.

Ezra was in charge of the "chicken chore chart," which included feeding, water checks, and poop patrol. He was not a fan of the last one.

At first, the chicks were quiet and adorable. Then they grew. Fast. They clucked loudly during Zoom calls, escaped the coop three times, and pecked at Ezra's shoelaces every morning like it was a sport.

One day, he went out to find Lady Featherbottom sitting proudly on a tiny egg. He ran inside yelling, "We have breakfast!"

His mom laughed and said, "We have biology, actually."

They cooked the egg with toast, split it four ways, and celebrated. Ezra still wasn't thrilled about poop patrol, but he had to admit—homeschool science had never been so tasty.

### **Questions:**

- 1.** What kind of animals did Ezra's family raise?
- 2.** What was Ezra in charge of?
- 3.** What were the chickens' names?
- 4.** What surprise did they find one day?
- 5.** What subject did Ezra's mom say it related to?

## **Grade 5 – Week 30**

### **Reading 1: The Invisible Fence Incident**

Lila and her family had just moved into a new house with a big backyard and an invisible fence for their dog, Max. The fence had a beep collar, but Max didn't care. He had courage—or no clue.

During a homeschool break, Lila let Max outside. Ten minutes later, she looked up and screamed, "He's in the neighbor's yard!"

She ran out, still wearing her apron from cooking class, and waved treats like confetti. Max barked happily and ran in circles, just out of reach. Lila tripped over a sprinkler and landed in a flower bed.

Her brother Jonah came out with a slice of ham and yelled, "EMERGENCY HAM DROP!" Max finally trotted over and took the bait.

They carried him inside and adjusted the fence settings.

"I think Max is immune to rules," Lila said.

Her mom nodded. "Perfect homeschool mascot."

#### **Questions:**

- 1.** What kind of fence did Max have?
- 2.** What went wrong when Lila let him outside?
- 3.** How did Jonah help bring the dog back?
- 4.** What happened to Lila during the chase?
- 5.** What nickname did her mom give Max?

## **Reading 2: The Toy Store Budget Mission**

Micah had just finished a homeschool unit on budgeting. His mom handed him ten dollars and said, "Let's go to the toy store. That's your budget."

Micah's eyes lit up. Then he walked in and saw a giant robot for \$29.99.

He sighed and looked around. There were slime kits, sticker books, puzzles, mini plush tacos, and some weird stretchy thing with googly eyes.

He checked every price tag, did some quick math, and kept track in a notebook. Other kids were grabbing toys without thinking, but Micah was determined.

In the end, he chose a puzzle and a bag of marbles. At checkout, he had 75 cents left and used it to buy a gumball.

Back in the car, he held up his receipt and said, "I stayed under budget AND got three items."

His mom gave him a high five. "Financial literacy level: Master."

### **Questions:**

1. What was Micah practicing during his shopping trip?
2. What expensive item did he want but couldn't afford?
3. How did he decide what to buy?
4. What items did he end up purchasing?
5. What did his mom say about his success?

## Grade 5 – Week 31

### Reading 1: The Library Scavenger Hunt

Sophie’s homeschool group was visiting the local library for a scavenger hunt. Each student got a list of clues: “Find a book with a talking animal,” “Find a biography about someone who flew,” and “Find a book with your favorite color on the cover.”

Sophie zipped through the shelves like a professional. She found a book about a skydiving grandma, one about a hamster detective, and a sea-blue cover featuring a jellyfish.

But one clue stumped her: “Find a book with an author whose name starts with Z.”

She looked. And looked. And looked.

Then her brother Micah held up a book and said, “Zelinsky. Boom.”

They finished with five minutes to spare, earned chocolate bookmarks (yes, they were edible), and stayed after to check out books “just for fun.”

“That’s the sneakiest way I’ve ever done language arts,” Sophie said. “And the most delicious.”

#### Questions:

1. What activity did the homeschool group do at the library?
2. What types of books did Sophie find?
3. Which clue was the hardest for her?
4. Who helped her find the answer?
5. What reward did they get at the end?

## Reading 2: The Snack Time Science Lab

Jonah's mom handed him a banana, a spoon, and a small plastic bag. "Today," she said, "we're doing a homeschool science experiment—right in the kitchen."

Jonah blinked. "Are we making banana pudding?"

"Nope," she said. "We're extracting DNA."

He squished the banana in the bag, added salt, dish soap, and warm water, then stirred like a mad scientist. He poured it into a cup, added cold rubbing alcohol, and watched... as something white and stringy floated to the top.

"Whoa," he said. "That's banana DNA?"

"Yep," his mom replied. "Now you can say you've seen the blueprint of a fruit."

Jonah proudly wrote in his science journal: *Today I learned that bananas are smarter than they look. And also, I am never eating one again without wondering if it knows something I don't.*

### Questions:

1. What science experiment did Jonah do?
2. What ingredients did he use?
3. What surprising thing did he discover?
4. How did he describe the DNA?
5. What did he write in his journal?

## Grade 5 – Week 32

### Reading 1: The Sleepy History Lesson

Lila loved history—most of the time. But after a long day of math, chores, and baking six dozen muffins for a homeschool bake sale, she was exhausted.

Her mom began reading aloud from a book about early explorers. Lila sat on the couch, wrapped in a blanket, trying to stay awake.

Then her brother Jonah whispered, “Pretend you’re the narrator.”

She perked up. “In a land filled with muffins and maps,” she began, “young Lady Lila battled the fierce Nap Monster of Knowledge.”

Their mom raised an eyebrow but smiled.

Soon, they had turned the entire lesson into a dramatic play. Jonah acted out a ship crashing into a muffin mountain. Lila invented a character called “Sir Snoozalot.”

They finished the chapter laughing, and Lila said, “Best history nap—I mean, lesson—ever.”

#### Questions:

1. What subject were Lila and her family learning?
2. Why was Lila so tired?
3. What did Jonah suggest to make it more fun?
4. What character did Lila invent?
5. How did the lesson end?

## **Reading 2: The Great Binder Rescue**

Micah's homeschool binder was a disaster. Pages stuck out in every direction, sticky notes were layered like lasagna, and there was one worksheet with jelly smeared across the corner from "Snack Week."

His mom said it was time for a Binder Rescue.

Micah got out fresh dividers, a hole puncher, and his "Very Official Binder Rescue Checklist." He made new labels: "Math (No Crumbs)," "Science (Real Notes Only)," and "Reading (With Doodles)."

Halfway through, he discovered a permission slip for a field trip that had happened three months ago.

"Oops," he said. "Guess I missed that nature hike."

When he finished, the binder actually closed without duct tape. His mom applauded.

Micah beamed. "This is organization... with honor."

### **Questions:**

1. What problem did Micah have with his binder?
2. What supplies did he use to fix it?
3. What funny label did he make for a section?
4. What did he discover during cleanup?
5. How did he feel after finishing?

## Grade 5 – Week 33

### Reading 1: The Homeschool Olympics

Sophie’s homeschool group hosted its first-ever “Backyard Olympics.” Events included: paper plate discus, rubber chicken toss, and the dramatic “Sock Slide Sprint.”

Sophie trained all week—doing warm-ups in the hallway, practicing lunges in the living room, and racing her dog to the mailbox.

On game day, she wore a headband, a cape made from a beach towel, and a determined expression.

She won gold in “Longest Water Balloon Hang Time” and silver in “Balancing a Book While Jumping.”

But her proudest moment was during the relay race, when she tripped, rolled twice, and still managed to toss the baton (a spatula) to the next runner.

“That was epic,” someone said.

Sophie stood up, grass in her hair, and declared, “I do it all for homeschool glory.”

#### Questions:

1. What special event did the homeschool group create?
2. What events were included?
3. What was Sophie’s most epic moment?
4. What did she wear on game day?
5. How did she describe her effort?

## **Reading 2: The Very Loud Typing Project**

Jonah had to type up a five-paragraph essay for homeschool language arts. The topic? “If I were president.”

He had ideas: free chocolate, trampoline sidewalks, and national nap time. But first—he had to type.

And Jonah typed loudly. Very loudly. Like, earthquake-level keyboard smashing.

Click-clack-CLACK!

His sister threw a pillow. “Is the keyboard okay?!”

“I type with passion,” Jonah replied.

He finally finished and read it aloud. His mom smiled and said, “It’s funny, thoughtful, and a little ridiculous—just like a real campaign speech.”

Jonah nodded proudly and printed it with rainbow ink. “That’s presidential flair.”

### **Questions:**

- 1.** What was Jonah’s writing assignment?
- 2.** What were some of his silly ideas?
- 3.** Why did his sister complain?
- 4.** How did his mom describe the essay?
- 5.** What made Jonah’s final paper extra colorful?

## **Grade 5 – Week 34**

### **Reading 1: The Pasta Engineering Challenge**

Lila's mom gave her a challenge: build a bridge using only dry pasta and marshmallows.

"At least let me eat while I build," Lila begged.

"Fine," her mom said. "But don't eat the support beams."

Lila spent an hour designing a spaghetti suspension bridge. Her little brother added a "noodle tower" and accidentally poked himself with a penne.

The bridge held up three pennies, then collapsed when Lila tried to test it with a toy dinosaur.

Still, they declared it a success. Later, they used the leftover marshmallows for hot chocolate and the broken pasta for dinner.

"Who says engineering isn't delicious?" Lila grinned.

#### **Questions:**

- 1.** What materials were used in Lila's challenge?
- 2.** What was she trying to build?
- 3.** What made the bridge collapse?
- 4.** How did her brother get involved?
- 5.** What did they do with the leftovers?

## Reading 2: The Lost-and-Found Sock Mystery

Ezra was on a mission. Somewhere in the house, his favorite striped sock had vanished. He looked under beds, behind the dryer, inside couch cushions—even inside the cereal box, just in case.

He found a toy car, a missing math flashcard, and his mom’s favorite pen, but no sock.

Finally, the dog walked in... wearing it like a sweater.

Ezra stared. “Did you—are you—what?!”

The dog wagged his tail proudly.

Ezra peeled it off, held it up like a trophy, and said, “Case closed.”

He added “Pet Investigation” to his homeschool portfolio and made a mini poster: *The Mystery of the Sock Bandit*.

### Questions:

1. What item was Ezra trying to find?
2. Where did he search?
3. What strange discoveries did he make?
4. Who had the sock in the end?
5. What did Ezra add to his homeschool portfolio?

## Grade 5 – Week 35

### Reading 1: The Homeschool House Tour Video

Micah’s homeschool co-op had a video assignment: create a “day in the life” tour of your homeschool setup.

Micah took it very seriously.

He filmed the reading nook, his math cubby, the kitchen “science lab,” and the hallway—which he called the “thinking corridor.”

His sister popped into every shot with snacks.

In one scene, he pointed to a pile of laundry and said, “This is our visual arts section—abstract style.”

He edited the video with dramatic music and added fake credits like “Directed by Micah” and “Cameo by The Dog.”

It went viral in the co-op chat.

His teacher said, “You win Best Use of Humor and Housework.”

#### Questions:

1. What assignment did Micah work on?
2. What parts of the house did he show in the video?
3. What joke did he make about laundry?
4. Who appeared in every scene?
5. What award did his teacher give him?

## Reading 2: The Double Tooth Surprise

Sophie had two loose teeth—one on the top, one on the bottom.

During homeschool math, she bit into an apple and froze.

“Wait,” she said. “Did I just lose both?!”

Sure enough, both teeth were gone, sitting in the apple like tiny surprises.

Her brother gagged. Her mom clapped. Sophie rinsed her mouth and said, “That’s gotta be worth a bonus from the Tooth Fairy.”

That night, she left a note: *Dear Tooth Fairy, Two in one day. Just saying.*

The next morning, she found a sparkly coin, a note that read, “Impressive,” and a coupon for “One Free Smoothie.”

“Worth it,” she said with a gap-toothed grin.

### Questions:

1. What unexpected thing happened to Sophie?
2. When did it happen?
3. How did her family react?
4. What did she leave for the Tooth Fairy?
5. What surprise did she get in return?

## **Grade 5 – Week 36**

### **Reading 1: The Final Portfolio Panic**

Lila realized something terrible on Monday morning: she hadn't finished her homeschool portfolio for the year.

Her mom calmly said, "You've done all the work. Now you just need to organize it."

Lila, however, saw it differently: "I must now battle the Chaos Dragon of Unlabeled Papers."

She gathered notebooks, drew a cover page with glitter pens, and found four essays hiding under the bookshelf.

By the end of the week, she had art samples, science experiments, poetry, and a math test with a doodle of a dancing robot.

She turned it in with flair.

Her evaluator smiled and said, "This is the most creative portfolio I've ever seen."

Lila bowed dramatically. "That's how I roll."

#### **Questions:**

- 1.** What did Lila forget to complete?
- 2.** What did she compare the mess to?
- 3.** What kinds of items did she include?
- 4.** What did the evaluator say?
- 5.** How did Lila react at the end?

## **Reading 2: The End-of-Year Ice Cream Experiment**

Ezra's mom let him create a final homeschool experiment—something fun to celebrate the year.

He chose to make ice cream in a bag.

He filled a small zip-top bag with cream, sugar, and vanilla. Then he sealed it inside a larger bag full of ice and salt, wrapped it in a towel, and shook it like his life depended on it.

Five minutes in: numb hands.

Seven minutes: brain freeze from sampling.

Ten minutes: success!

It was cold, sweet, and full of science.

As he took a bite, he said, "Best experiment ever. Can we do this for every subject?"

His mom replied, "Only if you want meatloaf-flavored chemistry."

"Pass," Ezra said. "But I'll take honors in Dessert Science."

### **Questions:**

1. What did Ezra choose for his end-of-year project?
2. How did he make ice cream?
3. What challenges did he face?
4. What joke did his mom make?
5. What subject did Ezra invent?