

# Martin/Watkins

## 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

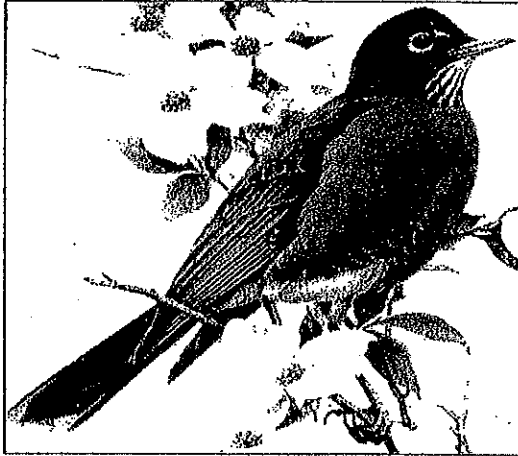


ELA

# Homework Packet

Read the article "Robins." Then answer the questions that follow.

## Robins



The robin, Michigan's state bird

The robin is Michigan's state bird. It is a thrush, a migratory songbird. The adult is between 9 and 11 inches in body length. The male and female both are brown and have bright rust-colored breast feathers. Young robins are brown and have speckled breasts.

Robins migrate in large flocks. Robins usually spend the winter in the southern United States. As many as 200 to 300 robins at a time fly south to warm climates in the fall. They will land at the same time to rest and feed. They do a great deal of damage to farmers' crops. They will land in a strawberry patch or tomato field in Florida and have a feast. The farmer has a headache! He's lost a crop.

At the end of winter the robins return to their summer habitat. Robins are among the first birds to migrate north each spring. The males return north in March, about two weeks before the females.

Almost two-thirds of a robin's diet is vegetable matter such as fruit and seeds. Robins are also excellent worm and insect gatherers. If robins could choose their dinner, cherries and mulberries would be two favorite items on the menu.

Have you ever observed a robin cock its head as though it were "listening" to the ground? Some people believe that when a robin does this it is listening for worms wiggling in the ground. Experts say that the robin isn't listening, but looking. Because its eyes are on the sides of its head, a robin must cock its head sideways to look for worms.

A robin's nest can be found in an evergreen tree, on a porch light fixture, or on a ledge of a building. Most nests will be 5 to 15 feet from the ground. They are made of grasses, weeds, mud, and even bits of string.

Two to seven pale blue eggs may be in a single nest. Usually it's four. "Robin's egg blue" is the name for the color blue that is the shade of a robin's egg. The mother robin is responsible for the incubation of her eggs in the nest. It takes 11 to 14 days for the eggs to hatch. Once hatched, the baby birds are fed with worms and insects by both parents. About 14 to 16 days after they are born, the young birds begin to learn to fly. If you approach a nest with baby robins, the parents may dive at you to warn you to go away.

ding

Reading

13 According to this article, robins eat which of the following foods?

- (F) seeds, tree bark, and worms
- (G) seeds, nuts, and roots
- (H) cherries, mulberries, and insects
- (I) cherries, nuts, and worms

14 Read this sentence from the article.

**Robins migrate in large flocks.**

What does the word *migrate* mean?

- (A) to travel in very large numbers
- (B) to move from one area to another
- (C) to imitate songs of many birds
- (D) to damage farmers' crops

15 If you were going to separate the text about robins into four sections, how could you label each section and why? Use details and information from the article to support your answer.

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THINK  
EXPLAIN


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16 If a female robin laid her eggs on May 1, when would the baby robins begin to fly?

- (F) about May 12
- (G) about May 16
- (H) about June 1
- (I) about June 15

17 What are some things you could do to attract robins to your neighborhood? Think about the robin's habitat, diet, and habits as you write your answer. Use details and information from the article to support your answer.

READ  
THINK  
EXPLAIN

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18 Where would you MOST likely find an article like "Robins"?

- (A) in a Florida tourism brochure
- (B) in a book called "Prairie Birds"
- (C) in a bird watching guide
- (D) in a flyer called "Michigan Mammals"

to fly?

Read the article "The Mockingbird." Then answer the questions that follow.

# The Mockingbird

The mockingbird is Florida's state bird. The adult is about 9-11 inches in length with a slim body. Both male and female mockingbirds have medium gray backs and light gray bellies. They have white wing patches and tail feathers. They have short wings and long legs.

Mockingbirds are song birds. They are a cousin to the robin. Mockingbirds can mimic the calls and songs of many other birds. This bird has been recorded mimicking 32 different kinds of birds in a 10 minute time period. Mockingbirds can also mimic frogs, crickets, piano notes, and the sound of squeaky wheels!

Almost half the mockingbird's diet consists of berries. They enjoy holly berries, mulberries, and grapes. They also eat insects. Their favorites are grasshoppers and beetles. They will eat seeds from backyard bird feeders, but prefer to eat insects, berries, and fruit from shrubs and gardens.

The mockingbird is a year round resident of Florida. The bird usually lives in shrubs or trees. The male and female work together to build their nest. The nest is built with twigs, grass, dry leaves, and plant stems. It is lined with soft grass or small roots. The nests are found in the fork of a tree or shrub, usually three to ten feet off the ground.

The female will lay from three to six eggs, but four eggs are most common. The eggs are blue-green with brown speckles. Only the mother will incubate the eggs. It takes 12-14 days for the eggs to hatch. The babies will learn to fly about 10-12 days after they hatch. The female mockingbird usually lays eggs two or three times each year.

Mockingbirds guard their nests and territory closely. If a mockingbird nest is in danger, both parents will dive at creatures near the nest. Mockingbirds rarely flock together in groups. They are usually found alone or in pairs.



The mockingbird is Florida's state bird

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19 Read this sentence from the article.

**Mockingbirds can mimic the calls and songs of many other birds.**

What does the word *mimic* mean?

- (F) to imitate
- (G) to sing
- (H) to make birdcalls
- (I) to create sounds

20 What is the MOST likely reason the mockingbird is Florida's state bird?

- (A) It is orange and white like the Florida state flag.
- (B) It can imitate other sounds.
- (C) It likes water.
- (D) It lives in Florida all year.

21 Read this sentence from the article.

**Only the mother will incubate the eggs.**

What does this sentence mean?

- (F) Only the mother bird lays eggs.
- (G) Only the mother bird sits on the eggs and hatches them.
- (H) Only the mother bird keeps other animals away from the eggs in the nest.
- (I) The mother bird will not allow other birds to feed her babies.

22 After reading the articles "Robins" and "The Mockingbird," what conclusion can you make about state birds?

- (A) Different states have different state birds.
- (B) All states have the same state bird.
- (C) Michigan and Florida are the only states that have a state bird.
- (D) All states must choose between mockingbirds and robins for their state bird.

Reading

23

Think about how robins and mockingbirds are alike and how they are different. Use the articles to complete this chart about each bird.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Robins

Mockingbirds

1. size	_____	_____
2. habitat	_____	_____
3. migration	_____	_____
4. food	_____	_____
5. nest	_____	_____
6. eggs	_____	_____
7. babies	_____	_____

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Write a paragraph about how robins and mockingbirds are ALIKE. Use information and details from the chart above.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

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Write a paragraph about how robins and mockingbirds are DIFFERENT. Use information and details from the chart above.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

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## Reading

Read the article "Thomas Edison's Greatest Discovery."  
Then answer the questions that follow.

### THOMAS EDISON'S GREATEST DISCOVERY

Thomas Edison was as a brilliant inventor. He invented over 1,000 items that people use every day including the light bulb, his most famous invention. Yet, things did not come easily for Thomas Edison. He had many obstacles in his life and he had to work hard to overcome them.

Thomas Edison was born in 1847. As a young boy, Tom was very curious and always asking questions. He wanted to know things such as why chickens sat on eggs or why the sky was blue. Sometimes adults lost patience with Tom because he asked so many questions. Tom's teachers said that he was all mixed up and confused. One teacher told Tom, "All you do is ask silly questions! There is nothing I can do with you at school!" Tom went home crying. Tom's mother became angry at the teacher's remark. She told Tom that he could learn at home. Tom never returned to school. In his whole life, Thomas Edison attended school for only three months.

Because Tom did not go to school, he had to learn things by himself. Tom taught himself how to read. He loved books. When Tom was nine years old, he read a science book and decided to become an inventor. Tom knew that an inventor must conduct experiments, so he built a homemade laboratory where he could work. Tom needed to earn money to buy things for his laboratory, so he got a job. He sold newspapers and snacks on the train that traveled between his hometown of Port Huron, Michigan, and Detroit, Michigan.

One morning Tom was late for his job on the train. The train started to pull away

from the station, so Tom ran as fast as he could to catch the moving train. The conductor saw Tom running and he reached out to help Tom. He grabbed the first thing he could reach -- Tom's ears. The conductor pulled Tom up onto the train by his ears. Tom heard something inside his ears go "snap" and they hurt for a long time afterward. After that, Thomas Edison lost almost all of his hearing.

Tom tried not to mind that he was nearly deaf. He often said the quiet in his head gave him room to think. However years later, he wrote in his diary, "I haven't heard a bird sing since I was twelve years old."

In the days when Thomas Edison was growing up, there weren't any telephones or computers. People used telegraphs to send messages. A telegraph sends messages over a wire using a special code, called the Morse code. Morse code spells words by tapping out a group of dots and dashes. Thomas Edison quickly learned the Morse code when he was in his teens and he became a telegraph operator. Even though Tom could not hear, he could feel the vibrations of the dots and dashes on the telegraph machine. He was able to earn a living tapping out Morse code to send messages.

In those days, there weren't any hearing aids to help deaf people, so Thomas Edison taught himself how to read lips. This way he could "hear" people talk. He also used the Morse code to help overcome his deafness. Later on in life, after he was married, he taught his wife Morse code and they tapped words into each other's hands.





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Reading

39 Read this sentence from the article.

Sometimes adults lost patience with Tom because he asked so many questions.

Which of the following means someone is *not patient*?

- F unpatient
- G inpatient
- H impatient
- I patientless

40 Why did young Tom Edison attend school for only three months?  
Use details and information from the article to support your answer.

READ  
THINK  
EXPLAIN

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41 Describe how Thomas Edison got his education after leaving school.  
Use details and information from the article to support your answer.

READ  
THINK  
EXPLAIN

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42 The Morse code is based on a series of

- (A) lights.
- (B) signals.
- (C) taps.
- (D) words.

43 How did the Morse code help Thomas Edison overcome his hearing loss? Use details and information from the article to support your answer.

READ  
THINK  
EXPLAIN

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44 According to the article, what was the MOST important way Thomas Edison's life changed by working on the train?

READ  
THINK  
EXPLAIN

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45 How did Thomas Edison's deafness affect his work as a telegraph operator and as an inventor?

- (F) He was able to be both an operator and an inventor even though he was deaf.
- (G) He was able to be both an operator and an inventor with the help of his wife.
- (H) He was able to be both an operator and an inventor only with the help of Morse code.
- (I) He missed hearing important messages as a telegraph operator, but he could still work as an inventor.

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Reading

- 46 Why does the author describe Morse code to readers?
- (A) because most readers do not understand Morse code
  - (B) so readers will know how Thomas Edison was able to work as a telegraph operator
  - (C) to help readers understand why Morse code was so important to Thomas Edison
  - (D) so readers will know that learning Morse code was another obstacle that Thomas Edison had to overcome

47 Read the following sentences from the article.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

**He often said the quiet in his head gave him room to think. However, years later, he wrote in his diary, "I haven't heard a bird sing since I was twelve years old."**

What do these sentences tell the reader about how Thomas Edison felt about his deafness?

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48 What is the BEST evidence from this article that Thomas Edison was a brilliant man?

- (F) He went to work when he was very young.
- (G) He read science books.
- (H) He was able to read lips.
- (I) He invented over 1,000 useful things.



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