

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Main Topic

Read the short story and answer each question.



The History of Paper

People haven't always had paper like we do today.

Long ago, people wrote on clay tablets, animal skins, and even tree bark. These materials were hard to carry and didn't last very long. The invention of paper changed the world.

Paper was first made in China.

Around 2,000 years ago, a Chinese man named Cai Lun created paper using old cloth, bark, and plant fibers. He mashed them into a wet pulp, pressed the pulp flat, and let it dry in the sun.

Paper spread to other parts of the world.

As people traveled, they brought paper-making with them. At first, it was only used by kings and rich people. Later, people in Europe learned to make paper using water-powered mills.

Modern paper is made by machines.

Today, most paper is made from wood. Huge machines chop trees, grind them into pulp, and press out thin sheets. Factories can make thousands of sheets of paper every minute.

We still use paper for many things.

Even with computers, people still use paper to write letters, draw pictures, read books, and wrap gifts. Paper is part of our everyday life.



Name: _____

The History of Paper

1. What is the main topic of this text?

- A. How people use pencils
- B. The invention and changes in paper over time
- C. Why trees grow in forests
- D. Who writes books

2. What is the focus of the second paragraph?

- A. What ancient people wore
- B. Who invented modern machines
- C. How Cai Lun made the first paper
- D. Why books are expensive

3. Fill in the blank:

Cai Lun used cloth, bark, and plant fibers to make the first _____.

4. What are the different steps in the history of paper, and how do they connect?

5. How does each paragraph help explain the big idea of how paper changed over time?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: M

Lexile Level: 425L-575L

Grade Level: 2nd Grade, End of the Year

Genre: Informational (History/Technology)

Introducing the Text

"Today we'll read about the history of paper and how it has changed the world. As we read, we'll find the main topic of the whole text, and we'll also figure out what each paragraph teaches us that supports that topic."

Vocabulary: pulp, invention, fibers, factory, machines

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you already know about how paper is made?
 2. Why do you think people needed a better material than clay tablets or tree bark?
 3. Have you ever used something that was made from paper in a creative way?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What does the second paragraph help explain?
 2. How do the fourth and fifth paragraphs show how paper is used today?
 3. Which paragraph taught you something you didn't know before?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What is the main topic of the entire text?
 2. How did the author organize the information to help you understand the history of paper?
 3. Why is it useful to know how everyday things like paper are made?
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Activity Idea

Let students try making their own recycled paper in small groups. Tear old paper into pieces, mix it with water to create pulp, and press it flat between screens or towels. After it dries, students can decorate it and write a short fact from the story on their handmade paper. This hands-on experience reinforces how paper is made and brings the historical process to life.

