



Reader 1: _____ Date: _____

Reader 2: _____

Reader 3: _____

Words to Preview

Point & Say

- 1 **kernel** – a grain of corn.
*Be careful not to break a tooth on a **kernel** of popcorn.*
- 2 **hull** – the outer shell of a fruit, nut, or seed; the hard outer covering of a popcorn kernel.
*The **hull** exploded when the popcorn kernel got hot.*
- 3 **headdresses** – coverings or decorations to be worn on the head.
*The women all wore beautiful **headdresses** for the Aztec history celebration.*
- 4 **New Mexico** – a state in the southwestern part of the United States.
*We toured a deep cave on our trip through **New Mexico**.*
- 5 **pressure** – force placed on something.
*David filled that balloon with so much air that the internal **pressure** caused it to pop.*

Aztecs
Native Americans

Popcorn

Note: Hyphenated words count as one word.

READER 1

Why does popcorn pop? What makes the hard golden kernel explode into the fluffy white popcorn we eat? Is it magic or is it science?	11 25
Farmers in the U.S. grow more corn than any other crop. Most of the corn, though, will not pop. Only popcorn will pop. Popcorn is different from other kinds of corn because it has a thicker hull.	39 51 62
Aztecs showed early explorers in North America how to pop corn. Other Native Americans also ate popcorn or made soup with it. Some also made jewelry and headdresses with it.	74 86 92

READER 2

There is proof that people have been eating popcorn for thousands of years. In 1948, some very old ears of popcorn were found in a bat cave in New Mexico. Some people think the ears of corn are about 4,000	104 119 132
---	-------------------



years old. They may be the oldest ears of popcorn ever found. 144

Some Native American tribes thought that spirits lived in the kernels of corn. The spirits were quiet and happy most of the time. However, when their homes in the kernels were heated, they got mad. The hotter their homes became, the more upset the spirits got. When the angry spirits got too hot, they burst out of the kernel. That is when the corn popped. 156
169
182
194
209

READER 3

Science gives us a different reason for why popcorn pops. There is a small amount of water in the center of each kernel of corn. As the kernel is heated, the water inside it gets hot. The heated water quickly turns into steam. As the water turns into steam, it expands. This puts pressure on the hull. Finally, the steam bursts through the hull and breaks it apart. The kernel turns inside out when this happens. The soft, white inside of the kernel expands until it is filled with air. That is when the popcorn is ready to eat. 222
237
251
264
277
290
305
308

There are many ways to cook popcorn. Some Native Americans heated the kernels in bowls of hot sand. People used to sell popcorn that they popped in a wire basket over a fire. Now, in places like movie theaters and parks, workers pour the kernels into a popcorn machine. At home, people use their microwaves to make popcorn in a bag. 319
333
347
359
369

People like to add different things to their popcorn before eating it. Some early Americans ate it with sugar and cream for breakfast. Today, people eat popcorn with butter and salt as a snack. Some stores sell popcorn in many flavors. You can choose popcorn coated with cheddar cheese, caramel, chocolate, or even grape. 381
393
406
417
423

Calculation Boxes		Reader 1		Reader 2	Reader 3
		Number of Words at Bracket		Number of Words at Bracket	
		Subtract: Number of Words at Subhead		-92	-209
Number of Words at Bracket		Equals: Number of Words Attempted			
Subtract: Number of Errors	-	Subtract: Number of Errors		-	-
Equals: Words Correct per Minute (WCPM)		Equals: Words Correct per Minute (WCPM)			
Accuracy Percentage	%	Accuracy Percentage		%	%



Reader 1: _____ Date: _____

Reader 2: _____

Reader 3: _____

Popcorn

Note: Hyphenated words count as one word.

READER 1

Why does popcorn pop? What makes the hard golden kernel explode 11
into the fluffy white popcorn we eat? Is it magic or is it science? 25

Farmers in the U.S. grow more corn than any other crop. Most of the 39
corn, though, will not pop. Only popcorn will pop. Popcorn is different 51
from other kinds of corn because it has a thicker hull. 62

Aztecs showed early explorers in North America how to pop corn. Other 74
Native Americans also ate popcorn or made soup with it. Some also 86
made jewelry and headdresses with it. 92

READER 2

There is proof that people have been eating popcorn for thousands of 104
years. In 1948, some very old ears of popcorn were found in a bat cave 119
in New Mexico. Some people think the ears of corn are about 4,000 132
years old. They may be the oldest ears of popcorn ever found. 144

Some Native American tribes thought that spirits lived in the kernels of 156
corn. The spirits were quiet and happy most of the time. However, when 169
their homes in the kernels were heated, they got mad. The hotter their 182
homes became, the more upset the spirits got. When the angry spirits 194
got too hot, they burst out of the kernel. That is when the corn popped. 209

READER 3

Science gives us a different reason for why popcorn pops. There is a 222
small amount of water in the center of each kernel of corn. As the kernel 237
is heated, the water inside it gets hot. The heated water quickly turns into 251
steam. As the water turns into steam, it expands. This puts pressure on 264
the hull. Finally, the steam bursts through the hull and breaks it apart. 277
The kernel turns inside out when this happens. The soft, white inside of 290



the kernel expands until it is filled with air. That is when the popcorn is ready to eat. 305
308

There are many ways to cook popcorn. Some Native Americans heated the kernels in bowls of hot sand. People used to sell popcorn that they popped in a wire basket over a fire. Now, in places like movie theaters and parks, workers pour the kernels into a popcorn machine. At home, people use their microwaves to make popcorn in a bag. 319
333
347
359
369

People like to add different things to their popcorn before eating it. Some early Americans ate it with sugar and cream for breakfast. Today, people eat popcorn with butter and salt as a snack. Some stores sell popcorn in many flavors. You can choose popcorn coated with cheddar cheese, caramel, chocolate, or even grape. 381
393
406
417
423

Investigate the Text

- 1 Underline the sentence that explains **what** makes popcorn different from other kinds of corn.
Write ① at the beginning of this underlined sentence.
- 2 Underline the sentence that tells **who** taught early explorers in North America about popcorn.
Write ② at the beginning of this underlined sentence.
- 3 Underline the sentence that gives the scientific explanation of **why** popcorn kernels break apart.
Write ③ at the beginning of this underlined sentence.
- 4 Underline the sentence that describes **how** some early Americans ate their popcorn.
Write ④ at the beginning of this underlined sentence.

Calculation Boxes

	Reader 1		Reader 2	Reader 3
		Number of Words at Bracket		
		Subtract: Number of Words at Subhead	-92	-209
Number of Words at Bracket		Equals: Number of Words Attempted		
Subtract: Number of Errors	-	Subtract: Number of Errors	-	-
Equals: Words Correct per Minute (WCPM)		Equals: Words Correct per Minute (WCPM)		
Accuracy Percentage	%	Accuracy Percentage	%	%



Mark It!

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------|----|-------------------|
| 1 | c a n c e <u>l</u> | 7 | l u g g a g e |
| 2 | a l l e r g i c | 8 | d i g i t |
| 3 | g i g a n t i c | 9 | i n t r o d u c e |
| 4 | u r g e n t | 10 | f a n c y |
| 5 | b a l a n c e | 11 | g e n t l e |
| 6 | p e n c i l | 12 | a d v a n t a g e |

Read It!

- | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | allergic | fancy | introduce |
| 2 | advantage | pencil | cancel |
| 3 | luggage | balance | digit |
| 4 | gentle | urgent | gigantic |
| 5 | pencil | advantage | allergic |
| 6 | introduce | luggage | fancy |
| 7 | cancel | digit | balance |
| 8 | gigantic | gentle | urgent |



Word Sort

If a syllable contains either the letter **c** or the letter **g**, figure out if it spells its hard or its soft sound. Write the whole syllable containing the **c** or **g** in the correct column. The schwa spellings are circled.

CHALLENGING

1 e•merge

2 i•ci•cle

3 cir•cUs

4 ger•bi

Hard c Syllable

Soft c Syllable

Hard g Syllable

Soft g Syllable

merge

MORE CHALLENGING

5 gal•ley

6 cy•cli•st

7 col•le•ge

8 gro•ce•ry

Hard c Syllable

Soft c Syllable

Hard g Syllable

Soft g Syllable

MOST CHALLENGING

9 ex•er•cise

10 dis•t@nce

11 en•er•gy

12 sug•gest•ing

Hard c Syllable

Soft c Syllable

Hard g Syllable

Soft g Syllable



CHALLENGING

- 1 can bend a pencil with magic (6)
- 2 the page with the wide margin (6)
- 3 has to recite each sentence twice (6)
- 4 is allergic to celery and spruce trees (7)

MORE CHALLENGING

- 5 the stage in the center of the college campus (9)
- 6 a scavenger hunt to find the largest Easter egg (9)
- 7 should apologize for your loud voice in the library (9)
- 8 a quick glance at the secret agent in the bushes (10)

CHALLENGING

- 1 Be very gentle with the fancy, glass icicle decorations. (9)
- 2 My mom drove to the grocery store just to buy gingersnap cookies. (12)
- 3 Grace, our pet gerbil, eats ice chips after she exercises on her wheel. (13)
- 4 Lucy and Nancy are about to embark on an exciting adventure in Iceland. (13)

MORE CHALLENGING

- 5 Please recycle the orange soda can rather than throwing it in the garbage can. (14)
- 6 Tracy suggested that we should do our research project on the culture of Greece or Egypt. (16)
- 7 Riding in the bicycle race will require a lot of energy, so eat some carbohydrates beforehand. (16)
- 8 Mice are nice, but they can carry germs that are harmful, so you do not want them dancing around in your cellar. (22)



WORDS

1. Read each word.
2. Underline words that contain a soft **g** sound.
3. Draw a **box** around words that contain a soft **c** sound.
4. **Circle** words that contain both a hard **c** or **g** sound **and** a soft **c** or **g** sound.

except

glance

magic

gargle

princess

accent

luggage

principal

ginger

policy

classic

orange

recycle

apology

cement

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

- 1 Find the two words that are flavors.

- 2 Find the word that means "to use again."

- 3 Find the word that means "to look at someone or something quickly."

- 4 Find the word that describes something you might take on a trip.
