Week 1 **Smokejumpers: Life Fighting Fires**
Specially trained firefighters jump from airplanes to fight blazes in hard-to-reach areas.

Week 2 **Lost City: The Discovery of Machu Picchu**
With help from a farmer and a Quechua boy, Professor Hiram Bingham discovered the city in the clouds, Machu Picchu.

Week 3 **Cliff Hanger**
Axel must rescue his dog from the mountain before the storm hits. Will there be time?

Week 4 **Antarctic Journal: Four Months at the Bottom of the World**
During her trip to Antarctica, writer Jennifer Owings Dewey has amazing, once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

Week 5 **Moonwalk**
While daring each other to jump over narrow valleys on the moon, Gerry and Vern get into trouble. Can they get to safety?

**Activity**
**Fiction and Nonfiction** How can you tell when a story is made up and when it is real? Talk to a friend or family member about the differences between fiction and nonfiction.

**Comprehension Skills Review**
In Unit 5, you learned and used many skills while reading the stories and selections.

- **The author’s purpose** is the reason an author has for writing—such as to persuade, to inform, or to entertain.
- **To compare and contrast** means to tell how things are alike and different.
- **Characters** are the people in a story. **Plot** is the series of events in a story. The **theme** is the big idea of the story.
- **A main idea** is what a text is mostly about. **Details** support and expand on the main idea.

- **To draw conclusions** is to form an opinion or idea based on what you know or learn from facts and details—the small pieces of information in an article or story.

**Activity**
**Great Adventures** What makes a great adventure? A great adventure can be as complex as preparing for a journey or as simple as reading a book. Talk with a family member about an adventure he or she had.
Unit Vocabulary Skills

Homographs
Homographs are words that are spelled the same but have different meanings and different pronunciations. Context clues can help you figure out which homograph is being used.

Activity Keep a list of homographs you encounter while reading and use the list to make up riddles.

Greek and Latin Roots
Many English words come from the older languages Latin and Greek. You can use a dictionary to find out more about a word’s Greek and Latin roots.

Activity Use a dictionary to find some words with the Latin roots terra and gloria. Write down these words and their meanings.

Unfamiliar Words
When you come across an unfamiliar word, use context clues—the words and sentences nearby—to help you figure out the word’s meaning.

Activity As you read, look for words you are not familiar with and check their meanings in the dictionary.

Synonyms
Synonyms are words that have similar meanings. You can find synonyms for a word in the dictionary and the thesaurus.

Activity With a partner, make a list of nouns. Find synonyms for the nouns in a dictionary or thesaurus, and see if your partner can guess the original word.

Unit Spelling Rules

Multisyllabic Words
Words with more than one syllable can be broken down into their individual word parts, which can be sounded out one by one.

Syllable Patterns V/CV and VC/V
When the vowel sound in the first syllable is long, divide the word after the vowel: lo cal. When the vowel sound in the first syllable is short, divide the word after the consonant: bon or.

Greek word parts
The Greek word part phon means “sound,” graph means “write,” meter means “measure,” scop means “see,” and micro means “small.” The ph letter combination is just one of several ways to spell the /f/ sound.

Words with Latin Roots
Knowing the Latin roots dic (“speak”), loc (“place”), port (“carry”), and rupt (“break”) can help with connecting the spelling and meaning of words that contain these parts.

Related Words
Related words often have parts that are spelled the same but pronounced differently: please, pleasant.
Homographs

• **Homographs** are words that are spelled the same but have different meanings and pronunciations. Circle the Words to Know word that is a homograph.

Practice  Read the following sentences. Fill in the blanks using the Words to Know. Then choose the definition that best matches the underlined word.

1. The ____________ filled the ____________
   and lifted my brother Bill into the air over the bow of the boat.
   a. knot  b. front
2. ____________ hard, I kept an eye on Bill so that Dad could watch the ____________ and ____________ the boat.
   a. control panel  b. to give comfort
3. It was ____________ to watch my brother so the wind would not buffet him into the water or the ____________ that lined the shore.
   a. knock down  b. self-serve meal
4. Yet Bill had given great ____________ to learning the best ____________ for parasailing, and he dove and soared like a hawk.
   a. plunged downward  b. pigeonlike bird

On Your Own  As you read “The California Gold Rush,” write down any homographs you encounter.

**Words To Know**
- concentrating
- dedication
- essential
- method
- parachute
- steer
- underbrush
- wind

School + Home  
**Home Activity** Your child studied homographs. As you read a favorite book together, look for homographs.

**DVD•292 Vocabulary**
Author’s Purpose

• The author's purpose is the reason or reasons the author has for writing. An author may write to persuade, to inform, to entertain, or to express ideas and feelings.

Practice  Read the passage. Then answer the questions below.

Humans influence nature in many ways. For example, farms, roads, and dams change landscapes and habitats. Sometimes humans affect nature accidentally. People have brought foreign plants to the United States for many purposes. When planted outside, they may spread too far. These invasive plants threaten other plants that belong there. Kudzu, for example, is a vine brought from Asia many years ago. The warmer weather in the South allows it to grow. Kudzu destroys trees and plants by feeding on them as it grows.

1. Write the main topic in your own words.

2. What is the author’s main purpose for writing the passage?

3. What might be a secondary purpose of the author?

4. What example does the author give to support his or her purpose?

5. Do you think the author met his or her purpose? Why or why not?

On Your Own  Use what you know about how authors express ideas and feelings as you read “The California Gold Rush.” Write a paragraph stating the author’s purpose and give three examples that support the purpose.

Home Activity  Your child identified the author's purpose in an article. Together, find an article about an interesting aspect of nature. After reading the article, discuss the author's purpose.
Greek and Latin Roots

Many words in English have their roots in the older languages Greek and Latin. For example, terraced contains the Latin root terra, meaning “earth” or “land.” Glorious contains the Latin root gloria, meaning “praise.”

Practice  Read the following sentences. Fill in the blanks using the Words To Know. Then circle the best definition for the underlined word. Use a dictionary to help you.

1. Watching the glory of the sunset, Kaya felt
   ____________ about the ____________ of the old house.
   a. something worth praising b. something that does not deserve praise

2. The ____________ stones were overgrown by blueberry bushes, which claimed the area as their territory.
   a. food belonging to someone b. land belonging to someone

3. A plaza ____________ with bricks was mostly washed away by a ____________ of water, but Kaya thought it looked ____________ against the green terrain.
   a. earth or land b. bricks or stones

4. Kaya noticed the tiny plants within ____________ of bushes, reminding her of her glass terrarium at home.
   a. enclosure b. door

On Your Own  As you read “The California Gold Rush,” look for words that have Greek or Latin roots. Check them in the dictionary.

Words To Know

- curiosity
- glorious
- granite
- ruins
- terraced
- thickets
- torrent

School + Home  Home Activity  Your child studied Greek and Latin roots. Read a newspaper article with your child and use the dictionary to find words derived from Greek and Latin.

DVD•294  Vocabulary
Compare and Contrast

- When you **compare** two things, you tell how they are alike.
- When you **contrast** them, you tell how they are different.

**Practice** Look at the pictures and answer the questions.

1. Contrast Kaya’s house and her grandfather’s house. What is different about them?

2. Now compare Kaya’s house and her grandfather’s house. What is similar about them?

3. Think about the two homes in the pictures. What animals might you find at both?

4. What kinds of animals might you find only at Kaya’s grandfather’s house?

**On Your Own** Use what you know about drawing conclusions as you read “The California Gold Rush.”

**Home Activity** Your child reviewed comparing and contrasting. Find two household objects, such as a pot and a spoon, and ask your child to tell you how the objects are alike and how they are different.

**Comprehension DVD•295**
Unfamiliar Words

- If you encounter an **unfamiliar word** while you are reading, you can use the words and sentences around it, or context clues, to help you figure out the meaning.

**Practice** Fill in the blanks with Words to Know. Then choose the meaning of the underlined unfamiliar word. Use a dictionary to help you.

1. Together, Antonia and Rosa ____________ through the woods to the site of the abandoned mine ____________.
   a. location  b. vision

2. They ____________ difficulties in the expedition.
   a. journey  b. danger

3. Awaiting their arrival, the other rescuers stood on the ____________ with climbing gear.
   a. equipment  b. wheels

4. Rosa affixed a sling to one end of a ____________ of nylon climbing rope, put it over her shoulder, and prepared to ____________ into the ____________.
   a. attached  b. prepared

5. Just moments after their ____________, the women indicated they wanted to be pulled up, and they emerged with the moose calf that had fallen in by accident.
   a. came to the surface  b. fell down

**On Your Own** As you read “With a Little Luck,” look for unfamiliar words and use the dictionary to find their meanings.

**Words To Know**
- coil
- descent
- foresaw
- rappel
- ridge
- shaft
- trekked
- void

**Home Activity** Your child reviewed unfamiliar words. Together, read a newspaper article and look up any unfamiliar words in a printed or online dictionary.

**DVD•296 Vocabulary**
Name ____________________________

Character, Plot, Theme

- **Characters** are the people and animals in a story.
- The **plot** is the story line or series of events that show characters in action. A plot begins when a character has a problem or conflict. The problem builds up during the rising action, is met directly at the climax, and comes to an end, with the action winding down, during the resolution.
- The **theme** is the big idea of the story.

**Practice** Read the passage. Then answer the questions below.

> It had been a quiet day in the forest when Ranger Nelson heard a moose crying out. She followed the sound and discovered a moose calf had fallen into an abandoned mine shaft. She radioed Ranger Bolan at the station for help. The two rangers tried several methods, but they could not get the calf out. Special rescue experts were called in. With special equipment and the rangers’ help, the moose calf was brought to safety.

1. Underline the main problem or conflict. What is the conflict?

2. Circle the names of the main characters. Who are they?

3. How would you explain the rising action in this passage?

4. What is the resolution of the passage?

5. What is a possible theme in this passage?

**On Your Own** Use what you know about character, plot, and theme as you read “With a Little Luck.” Keep a list of characters. On your list, circle the main character and write his or her problem. Then write a possible theme of the story.

**School + Home** 

**Home Activity** Your child reviewed the character, plot, and setting of a story. Retell one of your favorite stories, but replace one or two characters with you or someone in your family. Ask your child to tell you how the story changes and how it stays the same.
Greek and Latin Roots

• Many words in English have their roots in the older languages Greek and Latin. For example, the Latin roots con- means “with or together,” de- means “away from,” and anti- means “against or before.”

Practice  Read the following sentences. Fill in the blanks using the Words to Know. Then circle the best definition for the underlined word, using what you know about Latin roots.

1. The class waited for the arrival of Antarctic explorer with growing ______________. Though the auditorium was crowded, the professors did not deter people from standing in the back of the room.
   a. to scold or yell at  b. to prevent or keep away

2. Everyone was silent as she condensed her notes, and kept quiet as she described the ______________ terrain of the ice-covered ______________.
   a. took something apart  b. put something together

3. Her concise descriptions, even though they were short, were so vivid! The students could practically see the ______________ and hear the cracking during the ______________ of ice fields that spawned ______________.
   a. brief; brought together  b. long; using many words to say without wasting space something simple

4. No one in the audience deserted the room before the program was over. When her speech ended, the explorer had to ______________ right away.
   a. returned to a group or an area  b. left a group or an area

On Your Own  As you read “The California Gold Rush,” make a list of words with Greek or Latin roots.

Home Activity  Your child studied Greek and Latin roots. Review the Words to Know and use the dictionary to find out which have Greek or Latin roots.

DVD•298  Vocabulary
Main Idea

- The **main idea** of a text is what it is mostly about.
- **Details** support and expand on the main idea.

**Practice** Look at the picture. Then answer the questions.

1. Dmitri likes to play which of the following sports?
   - a. basketball
   - b. soccer
   - c. tennis

2. Which detail tells you about the sport?
   - a. his backpack
   - b. his shirt
   - c. his shin guards

3. From the picture, what else does Dmitri like to do?
   - a. draw
   - b. read
   - c. write

4. Which sentence best states the main idea?
   - a. Dmitri is a student who loves to play soccer.
   - b. Dmitri does his homework as soon as he gets home.
   - c. Dmitri takes part in afterschool activities.

**On Your Own** Use what you know about main idea as you read “The California Gold Rush.” List important details as you read. When you have finished, read them and decide what would be the main idea for the selection. Write a sentence that states the main idea.

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**Home Activity** Your child reviewed main idea. Together, read a newspaper article and talk about its main idea.
Name

**Synonyms**

- A **synonym** is a word that means the same or almost the same as another word. The thesaurus lists synonyms.

**Practice** Fill in the blanks with Words to Know.

1. “What’s the ___________ doing here?” asked Bruno. He ___________ over me as I walked up.

2. “Troy is part of the team,” said Coach Muldaur. “And I won’t stand for having him ___________.”

3. ___________ all my courage, I said, “I’ll race you, Bruno,” and pointed to the edge of a ___________ a mile away.

4. Ten minutes later, Bruno ___________ out of the ___________.

5. “I’m sorry I called you a name,” he said, as he ___________ to the waiting car.

**Practice** Use the Words to Know to find synonyms for the following words. Use a thesaurus to help you.

1. What is a synonym for *valley*? ____________________________

2. What is a synonym for *teased*? ____________________________

3. What is a synonym for *stumbled*? ____________________________

4. What is a synonym for *plodded*? ____________________________

5. What is a synonym for *gathering*? ____________________________

**On Your Own** As you read “With a Little Luck,” list the verbs you find and look up a synonym for each in a thesaurus. Write sentences with the new words you find.

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**Home Activity** Your child reviewed synonyms. With your child, read a magazine article and use a thesaurus to find synonyms of adjectives.

**DVD•300 Vocabulary**
Name ________________________________

**Draw Conclusions**

- **Drawing conclusions** is forming an opinion or idea based on what you already know or on the facts and details in a text. Facts and details are the small pieces of information in an article or story. Facts and details “add up” to a conclusion. Conclusions formed by the author or the reader must make sense.

**Practice** Read the passage and then answer the questions.

Skylar dangled at the end of her rope, having rappelled as far as she could. She tried to swing to a ledge at her left, but couldn’t reach. She wanted to ask her dad for help. Skylar took a deep breath and closed her eyes. She tried to remember everything her father had taught her about rock climbing. “Stay calm,” she thought. “Find another way.” Slowly, Skylar looked down. To her right, she saw a good path if she could free climb the next 100 feet. “Thanks, Dad,” she whispered.

1. Draw a conclusion about Skylar’s personality.

2. What is one detail or fact that supports this conclusion?

3. What is a conclusion that you can draw about how Skylar feels about her father?

4. What is one detail or fact that supports this conclusion?

5. On a separate sheet of paper, draw a conclusion about the danger of the situation Skylar is in. Include details based on prior knowledge that support the conclusion.

**On Your Own** As you read “With a Little Luck,” draw a conclusion about the main character’s personality. Would you want to be friends with this character? Why or why not? Write your response.

**School + Home**

**Home Activity** Your child drew conclusions based on details in a short passage. Together, read an article about someone who was in a dangerous situation. Draw a conclusion about why the situation was dangerous. Help your child come up with details from his or her own ideas to support that conclusion.

Comprehension DVD•301
The California Gold Rush

The California Gold Rush Begins

Back in the mid-1800s, the world caught a fever—gold fever, that is! It all started in 1847 when the entrepreneur James Sutter decided to build a sawmill near the American River. The construction would take place in an area of California now known as Coloma.

Sutter intended to use the mill to make and sell lumber to local immigrants. He hired another man named James Marshall to build and oversee the mill. One January day in 1848, Marshall was working at the mill when he noticed a few glinting yellow particles in the river sediment. He couldn’t believe his eyes. Gold was in the American River!

Sutter tried to keep the discovery secret, but it wasn’t long before the California newspapers spread the word about the exciting event. Soon San Francisco caught gold fever, and a torrent of men skipped town to head for the gold mines. The rest of the country remained doubtful—they just couldn’t believe the rumors were true. Everyone changed their minds, however, when President James Polk confirmed the stories. California really was full of glorious gold.

The Voyage of the Argonauts

The news caused a stir around the world, and droves of gold-seekers began to depart for California. Many people were from the United States, but other groups also came from as far away as Europe, Australia, and Asia. Adventurers who traveled to seek their fortunes were known as argonauts. The Argonauts were heroes of ancient Greek mythology who had gone seeking an enchanted golden fleece.

To get to California, Americans used three different routes, all of which had their dangers. The first method was to travel west across the continent on a wagon. The second method was to sail south along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean, cross the isthmus of Panama, and then sail up the Pacific coastline to their destination in California. The last option was to sail all the way down the Atlantic Ocean, passing the southernmost tip of South America, and then continuing up the Pacific Ocean to California.
None of these routes were ever pleasant. Those people traveling over land suffered from extreme weather and difficult terrain. Others traveling by boat often endured seasickness, cabin fever, and rotten food. Everyone was at risk for contracting diseases. No matter how the argonauts traveled, they were guaranteed a rough and difficult journey.

A Population Explosion

California’s population began to explode as new gold-seekers arrived every day. In 1846, before the gold rush began, less than 700 people lived in California. This number grew to over 200,000 by the end of 1852. This population boom meant that there was less gold to go around for each individual miner. Many people expecting to “get rich quick” were sorely disappointed. There simply wasn’t enough gold to sustain everyone.

A Miner’s Life

Mining gold was difficult, though the process was relatively simple. Workers would use picks and shovels to break apart rocky surfaces. Then they would take the small rock fragments and put them in a pan full of water. Gold, which is heavy, would sink to the bottom of the pan while lighter rocks and minerals would stay at the top.

Many people toiled for long hours panning for gold just to make ends meet. Food and supplies were expensive—a dozen eggs could cost a miner as much as fifty dollars! Miners also suffered from homesickness, harsh weather, and illness. Even when mining tools improved over the years, many frustrated workers believed the labor wasn’t worth the effort.

Despite their many hardships, some miners found success. California mines yielded millions of dollars—approximately $207,000,000 from 1848 to 1852. Those lucky enough to make their fortune inspired others to continue working.

When the Gold Rush ended in the mid-1850s, a chapter in California history would close forever. As gold fever waned and people moved onto new adventures, no one would forget the exhilarating energy of those golden times.
With a Little Luck

Lucky B. Carlson never liked his name. It seemed to Lucky that with a name like his, life should be filled with heaps of good fortune. But as luck would have it, Lucky was just about the unluckiest person who ever walked the good green earth.

Over the course of Lucky’s short life, he’d been sprayed by two skunks, stung by twelve bees, bitten by three snakes, and hit by four balls. He had fallen into seven ditches, eaten (accidentally) three worms and eleven spiders, tripped down eight sets of stairs, stubbed all ten of his toes, suffered through fifteen poison ivy rashes, and glued his feet to his shoes—twice. Lucky wasn’t even sure how a person could glue his feet to his shoes once, let alone two times. “Just dumb luck,” his mama always said.

In 1849, when news of the gold rush hit Lucky’s town, Lucky decided to head on west to California. He just knew his luck would change over there. “I’m sure I’ll strike it rich,” he told his family, “or my name ain’t Lucky B!”

The gold rush craze was in full swing by the time Lucky staggered into California six months later. He was just about as worn out as a potato sack stuffed full of metal tacks. As soon as Lucky got some rest and a hearty meal under his belt, he staked himself a land claim and set up residence in a local mining camp. The camp where he lived was nicknamed Lice-Love Hollow for reasons Lucky soon discovered. “Them lice critters just love a head full of miner’s hair!” the other men laughed. “Fellows have got to be careful out here. Never know when a louse—big or small—might come and get ya.”

Lucky gulped and nodded. He hoped his time at the camp would remain lice-free.

Within a couple of days, Lucky fell into the miner’s way of life, working from sunup to sundown on his search for sweet shiny gold. His back began to hurt from always stooping, and his fingers started to freeze from the icy cold river water. Mining life wasn’t exactly what Lucky had expected it to be. He wanted to strike it rich, but all he’d really struck so far were his own two feet with a heavy metal shovel.

Whenever Lucky was lucky enough to find a bit of gold dust glinting in the river water, he made sure to keep it safe in a pouch around his neck.
After working for many days, Lucky finally figured he had enough precious metal to make a trip into town. He needed to buy a few new supplies and longed for a change of scenery.

As Lucky trekked through the rough countryside, the wind was whipping something fierce. He was clutching his hat to his head when suddenly he tripped over something hard. Lucky fell flat on the ground, bumped his head on a rock, and let out a loud groan.

When he opened his eyes, he saw a metal horseshoe lying next to him. *Now how in tarnation did that thing get here?* Lucky wondered. *And why did it have to trip me up, today of all days?* Lucky sighed. It was just another instance of his bad luck sticking close to his heels like a shadow in the sun.

Lucky picked up the horseshoe and put it in his coat pocket. Maybe one day, he’d find himself a horse to go with this horseshoe. He was just about to continue on his way when a rough voice called him from behind.

“Well lookie here!” the voice said. “I’ve found myself a runt of a miner.” Quickly, Lucky spun around to find the masked face of a burly bandit. “On your way to town, sonny?” the man taunted. “I’m sure I can save you the trouble of heading all the way there. All it’ll cost you is that pouch around your neck.”

Lucky swallowed. What could he do? His bad luck had struck again! Then he remembered the horseshoe in his coat and decided, in a flash, to throw it at the bandit. “Take this, you louse!” Lucky yelled. But the horseshoe missed the bandit by a mile and smacked the rock behind his head.

The bandit let out a hearty laugh. “That was a good one!” he said to Lucky. “Now if you don’t mind—the gold or your life.” There was only one thing left to do. With a heavy heart, Lucky handed over his pouch. “Nice doing business with you,” the bandit sneered. Then he took off and was gone in an instant.

Lucky trudged up the path to where his new horseshoe lay. “Some lucky horseshoe you are!” he said out loud. Then he sighed and leaned his head against the rocky hill where his horseshoe had gouged a hole. It was only then that he noticed a yellow glint shining just beneath the brown layers of rock. Could it be? Lucky blinked his eyes and cracked a smile. “Well, I’ll be!” he said. “As sure as my name is Lucky B. Carlson, I’ve found a vein of solid gold!”