

# Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ 6<sup>th</sup> Edition

## DIBELS™

### *Third Grade Scoring Booklet* *DIBELS™ Benchmark Assessment*

Edited By:

Roland H. Good III

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*University of Oregon*

Available:

<http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>

#### Instructions:

This packet includes 2 parts: the student response form and student stimulus materials. The student response forms are photocopied back to back and saddle stapled. The same form is used by each student for each benchmark assessment throughout the year. The second part is the reusable student stimulus materials. Make one copy for each person who is doing the benchmark testing. They can be laminated and comb bound for reuse.

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>.

Notes:

**Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ 6<sup>th</sup> Ed.**  
**University of Oregon**  
**Third Grade Benchmark Assessment**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Benchmark 1 Beginning/Fall</b>	<b>Benchmark 2 Middle/Winter</b>	<b>Benchmark 3 End/Spring</b>
Date			
DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency	(middle score)	(middle score)	(middle score)
Retell Fluency (Optional)	(middle score)	(middle score)	(middle score)
Word Use Fluency (Optional)	(Optional)	(Optional)	(Optional)

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>.



Benchmark G3-3  
DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency – Passage 3

My Parents

I'm Mexican-American because my parents were both born in Mexico and I was born in America. My parents came to work in the United States before they even finished school. They were just a little older than I am now when they moved here. They got married in Texas and then they moved to California because their families lived there.

My mother and father worked very hard to make our lives better. At first they worked on farms. They both worked seven days a week when there was work and the weather was good. Sometimes the farms that needed workers were far away and they had to travel a long distance. Sometimes it would rain and they couldn't work for days. At other times the crops weren't ready when they arrived. There could be too many people to do the same work and sometimes there was no work at all.

My mother is bilingual because she speaks both English and Spanish. She can understand almost everyone. She was able to get another job because lots of places need employees who can speak English and Spanish.

My father speaks only Spanish, but not for long. He is taking English classes at night so he can find another job. He says English is a difficult language to learn. I'm really proud of my parents.

Retell:	Total:
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48	
49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71	
72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94	

Benchmark 1.1  
DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency

My Friend

I have a new friend at school. She can't walk so she uses a wheelchair to get around. She comes to school in a special van that can transport four people who use wheelchairs. The van brings my friend and another boy to school. My friend is in third grade with me and the boy is a fourth grader.

I like to watch my friend get in and out of the van. The driver pushes a button and part of the van floor lowers to the driveway to form a ramp. My friend just wheels up the ramp and goes inside. After she is inside, the driver pushes the button and the ramp puts itself away. When it is time to get out of the van, they do the same thing again. Sometimes I help open the door so she can roll right inside.

My friend and I do everything together. Our teacher lets us sit together in the front row, and we always go to lunch together. My friend moves so fast down the hall that she always gets the best seats in the cafeteria. Sometimes we trade sandwiches. At recess, we always play on the same team. My friend sure has strong arms. She hardly ever misses a shot when we play basketball and she can throw the farthest of anyone in third grade.

Retell:	Total:
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48	
49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71	
72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94	

**Benchmark 3.2**  
**DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency**

**Animal Tracks**

I saw a show on TV last night about animal tracks. Animals  
and people leave their footprints, or tracks, wherever they go.  
Each track tells a story. A good tracker can tell what kind of  
animal made the tracks. For instance, members of the dog family  
have four toes on each foot. A tracker can see the toenail marks  
in the footprint of a dog. The dog family includes foxes, coyotes,  
and all pet dogs.  
The cat family also has four toes on all four feet but their  
toenails don't show. That is because cats pull their toenails in  
when they walk. Cats could be mountain lions, bobcats, or pet  
cats. Rabbits have four toes on all four feet also. A tracker can  
tell a rabbit from a cat or dog because a rabbit's back feet are  
much larger than their front feet.  
Animals with five toes on each foot are members of the  
weasel family. The weasel family includes skunks, otters, and  
raccoons. Most members of the rodent family have four toes in  
front and five in back. Rodents could be mice, rats, chipmunks or  
squirrels.  
A person who learns how to read the story in the tracks can  
use their knowledge to help track people who are lost. A tracker  
who is really good can tell men from women and boys from  
girls. A good tracker also can tell the height and weight of a  
person just from the footprints.

Retell: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total: \_\_\_\_\_

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94									

**Benchmark 1.2**  
**DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency**

**Going to Family Camp**

My favorite part of family camp is the campfire program at  
the lake. We wait until the stars and moon are out. We walk  
down to the edge of the water where a big bonfire is going. We  
all snuggle together watching the flames because it's cold after  
dark.  
The camp director leads everyone in songs. He plays the  
banjo. We sing "You are My Sunshine," and "She'll be Coming  
Around the Mountain." Then he divides the group in two and we  
sing rounds like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and "Are You  
Sleeping?"  
Then we have stories and skits. The stories are usually tales  
about campers at family camp in previous years, and a funny or  
brave thing that they did. One story was about my older brother  
rescuing a cat. The skits are always silly.  
When the campfire burns down to coals, it's time to toast  
marshmallows. Some people like their marshmallows golden  
brown. Other people like theirs crispy. Some kids can't wait to  
toast them and eat their marshmallows right out of the bag. We  
toast marshmallows to make "Some Mores." "Some Mores" are  
graham crackers with chocolate that is topped with a hot  
marshmallow. They taste so good you want some more, but they  
are really sticky! Everyone has to wash up before bed.  
Now we are all sleepy and ready to go back to our cabin. We  
stand together and sing a song called "Taps." My mom and dad  
say they have been singing "Taps" at campfires since they were  
little kids like me.

Retell: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total: \_\_\_\_\_

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94									

Benchmark 3.1  
DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency

Pots

My family makes pots out of clay at our pueblo. These aren't just any pots, though. They are pretty special. Our pots are on display all over the world. People travel for miles to visit our pueblo and collect our pots. We have shown many of our pots in competitions and we have won lots of awards. Someone even wrote a book about my aunt and the pots that she makes.

I am learning to make our pots from my family. From my grandfather I am learning about the clay. We collect the clay from special areas of the river and process it just right. We have to keep the clay moist and we have to work the clay to force any air bubbles out. If there is an air bubble in the clay the pot will break when it is fired.

We hand build our pots. That means we don't use a wheel or a mold. Instead, we have a picture in our mind of how we want the pot to look. We build the pot layer by layer from the base. We are careful to make the pot match the shape in our mind at each step.

Our pots are decorated with designs that tell a story or have a meaning. If you know how to read the designs, you can learn many important lessons about life. I can tell if a pot was made by one of my relatives from the designs. I can tell who made it, and sometimes I can tell you about when it was made.

Retell:	Total:
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48	
49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71	
72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94	

Benchmark 1.3  
DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency

Planting a Garden

We eat lots of fresh vegetables at our house. Mom is an excellent cook and she has lots of recipes for making them taste delicious. Sometimes they are expensive to buy at the store so Dad suggested we grow our own.

Dad asked all the members of my family what our favorite vegetables were. I said carrots, broccoli, and beans. My mother likes tomatoes the best. Dad said he wanted to grow green onions, spinach, potatoes, and corn.

We went to the hardware store and bought seeds and little broccoli and tomato plants. We all helped prepare the garden in our backyard. We turned over the dirt with shovels. Then we used a hoe to make little ditches for planting the vegetable seeds. We dug deeper holes for the broccoli and tomatoes. We watered everything and sprinkled some fertilizer around.

I checked the garden every day to see if any vegetables were coming up. After about a week I saw tiny green leaves where the carrots were planted. Then each day more seeds sprouted.

In two months we could eat the spinach, onions, and broccoli. It was almost the end of summer before we could harvest the other vegetables. Everything we grew in our garden was delicious. It was worth the wait, especially for the fresh green beans that my mother cooked with bacon and onion. My dad said the corn was the best he ever tasted.

Retell:	Total:
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48	
49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71	
72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94	

Make sure you have reviewed the long form of the directions and have them available. Say these specific directions to the student:

*Listen to me use this word, "green": (pause) The grass is green. Here is another word, "jump" (pause) I like to jump rope. Your turn to use a word (pause) "rabbit":*

CORRECT RESPONSE: If student uses the word correctly in a phrase, say	<i>Very good.</i>
INCORRECT RESPONSE: If student gives any other response, say,	<i>Listen to me use the word "rabbit", (pause) "The rabbit is eating a carrot." Your turn, "rabbit."</i>

*OK. Here is your first word.*

C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>ant</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>written</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>drip</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>seeds</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>most</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>dare</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>hidden</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>buildings</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>land</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>felt</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>nothing</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>hungry</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>bear</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>proud</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>missing</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>wishing</i>
C	1	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	<i>ant</i>
		Total Words in Correct Sentences:	

**Benchmark 2.3**  
**DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency**

**Getting Email**

At our house, the mail carrier isn't the only one who brings 12  
 us messages. Our computer also brings mail. Our family has an 23  
 email address. All we have to do is turn on the computer and get 37  
 on the Internet. Our computer tells us if we have new mail. 49

Email is much faster than regular letters. If I send a regular 61  
 letter to my cousin who lives in Japan it can take weeks to get an 76  
 answer. If I email to my cousin, she usually emails back the 88  
 same day. She lives 4,000 miles away and across the Pacific 99  
 Ocean but our email messages come and go very quickly. 109

My cousin is nine years old, just like me. We send email to 122  
 each other almost every day. We tell each other about our 133  
 schools, our friends, and our soccer teams. Sometimes we send 143  
 jokes back and forth. Sometimes we ask questions about what 153  
 we hear in the news about our countries. Sometimes we play 164  
 chess with each other using the computer. We think of our 175  
 moves on separate chess sets and then use email to send our 187  
 moves back and forth. 191

My dad and mom send email messages back and forth to 202  
 Japan as well as to Hawaii, where we have many relatives. 213  
 Because our relatives live so far apart it is hard for us to get 227  
 together. If it weren't for email, we wouldn't be able to stay in 240  
 touch as easily. With email, we can communicate without having 250  
 to wait for a letter or buy expensive stamps. 259

Retell: Total:

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48			
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71			
72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94			

**Benchmark 1**  
**DIBELS™ Word Use Fluency**

**kit**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**hint**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**bird**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**castle**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**downstairs**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**duck**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**shiny**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**takes**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**roots**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**dark**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**sails**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**porch**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**toad**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**crystal**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**mate**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**dream**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**advantage**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

**pounded**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				

 \_\_\_\_ C I

Total Words in Correct Sentences: 

--

Keiko the Killer Whale

10 Keiko the whale was captured near Iceland and brought to  
 21 California. He became a famous performer who did tricks at a  
 33 theme park. He even started in a movie! Keiko is an Orca  
 44 whale. Orcas are called killer whales because they feed on seals.  
 57 Keiko was not healthy at the theme park. He was thin and his  
 70 skin was covered with sores. His body was too big for the tank  
 83 he lived in. The water was not cold enough for him to be  
 93 comfortable. He couldn't get enough exercise to be healthy. He  
 98 was not a happy whale.  
 108 Keiko was taken to the Oregon Coast Aquarium to get  
 119 healthy and eventually be released back into the wild. At the  
 131 aquarium, he ate the kind of fish he would have caught himself  
 145 in the ocean. He lived in a very large tank full of cool ocean  
 156 water. Trainers took care of him and helped him remember what  
 163 it was like to be wild again.  
 174 Keiko ate well and exercised every day. He gained about two  
 186 tons and got healthy again. When he was well he was moved  
 202 back to his new home in the ocean. He was so big he had to be  
 216 flown in a special plane with a pool that took up the entire inside  
 219 of the plane.  
 232 Keiko's new home is in a pen in the ocean, not a tank.  
 243 Trainers are helping him learn to catch his own fish. Someday  
 256 they hope he will be released into the wild again. Maybe he will  
 262 find his original family of Orcas.

Retell: Total: 262

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94
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The Field Trip

13 Last week our teacher said we were going on a field trip to  
 25 the fish hatchery. She gave us permission letters to take home to  
 37 be signed by our parents before we could go. She encouraged us  
 50 to ask our parents if they would like to come along. We needed  
 58 some parents to help provide transportation. Everyone was  
 67 supposed to bring a snack and a sack lunch.  
 79 My dad surprised me by volunteering to go. He said he could  
 93 take a vacation day and that our car could hold a couple of my  
 105 friends. Three cars and two vans were needed to take the whole  
 114 class. Two of my friends rode in our car.  
 126 At the hatchery, we saw ponds full of fish. We learned the  
 138 fish were rainbow trout. You could see the colors of the rainbow  
 151 on their sides. The ranger let us take handfuls of pellets to feed  
 164 the trout. When we threw the pellets into the ponds the fish got  
 176 very excited. Some leaped out of the water. The fish could see  
 182 the food coming from far away.  
 194 When the trout grow to about six inches long they will be  
 207 scooped up and put inside a tanker truck. The truck will take the  
 220 fish to nearby rivers and release them. In the river, the fish will  
 233 have to learn to find their own food. When my dad goes fishing,  
 246 maybe he will catch some of them and bring them home for our  
 247 dinner.

Retell: Total: 247

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94
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Early Literacy Skills™ 6<sup>th</sup> Edition

DIBELS™

*Third Grade Student Materials*  
*DIBELS™ Benchmark Assessment*

Edited By:  
Roland H. Good III  
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Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>.

## My Friend

I have a new friend at school. She can't walk so she uses a wheelchair to get around. She comes to school in a special van that can transport four people who use wheelchairs. The van brings my friend and another boy to school. My friend is in third grade with me and the boy is a fourth grader.

I like to watch my friend get in and out of the van. The driver pushes a button and part of the van floor lowers to the driveway to form a ramp. My friend just wheels up the ramp and goes inside. After she is inside, the driver pushes the button and the ramp puts itself away. When it is time to get out of the van, they do the same thing again. Sometimes I help open the door so she can roll right inside.

My friend and I do everything together. Our teacher lets us sit together in the front row, and we always go to lunch together. My friend moves so fast down the hall that she always gets the best seats in the cafeteria. Sometimes we trade sandwiches. At recess, we always play on the same team. My friend sure has strong arms. She hardly ever misses a shot when we play basketball and she can throw the farthest of anyone in third grade.

## Going to Family Camp

My favorite part of family camp is the campfire program at the lake. We wait until the stars and moon are out. We walk down to the edge of the water where a big bonfire is going. We all snuggle together watching the flames because it's cold after dark.

The camp director leads everyone in songs. He plays the banjo. We sing "You are My Sunshine," and "She'll be Coming Around the Mountain." Then he divides the group in two and we sing rounds like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and "Are You Sleeping?"

Then we have stories and skits. The stories are usually tales about campers at family camp in previous years, and a funny or brave thing that they did. One story was about my older brother rescuing a cat. The skits are always silly.

When the campfire burns down to coals, it's time to toast marshmallows. Some people like their marshmallows golden brown. Other people like theirs crispy. Some kids can't wait to toast them and eat their marshmallows right out of the bag. We toast marshmallows to make 'Some Mores.' 'Some Mores' are graham crackers with chocolate that is topped with a hot marshmallow. They taste so good you want some more, but they are really sticky! Everyone has to wash up before bed.

Now we are all sleepy and ready to go back to our cabin. We stand together and sing a song called "Taps." My mom and dad say they have been singing "Taps" at campfires since they were little kids like me.

## Planting a Garden

We eat lots of fresh vegetables at our house. Mom is an excellent cook and she has lots of recipes for making them taste delicious. Sometimes they are expensive to buy at the store so Dad suggested we grow our own.

Dad asked all the members of my family what our favorite vegetables were. I said carrots, broccoli, and beans. My mother likes tomatoes the best. Dad said he wanted to grow green onions, spinach, potatoes, and corn.

We went to the hardware store and bought seeds and little broccoli and tomato plants. We all helped prepare the garden in our backyard. We turned over the dirt with shovels. Then we used a hoe to make little ditches for planting the vegetable seeds. We dug deeper holes for the broccoli and tomatoes. We watered everything and sprinkled some fertilizer around.

I checked the garden every day to see if any vegetables were coming up. After about a week I saw tiny green leaves where the carrots were planted. Then each day more seeds sprouted.

In two months we could eat the spinach, onions, and broccoli. It was almost the end of summer before we could harvest the other vegetables. Everything we grew in our garden was delicious. It was worth the wait, especially for the fresh green beans that my mother cooked with bacon and onion. My dad said the corn was the best he ever tasted.

## The Field Trip

Last week our teacher said we were going on a field trip to the fish hatchery. She gave us permission letters to take home to be signed by our parents before we could go. She encouraged us to ask our parents if they would like to come along. We needed some parents to help provide transportation. Everyone was supposed to bring a snack and a sack lunch.

My dad surprised me by volunteering to go. He said he could take a vacation day and that our car could hold a couple of my friends. Three cars and two vans were needed to take the whole class. Two of my friends rode in our car.

At the hatchery, we saw ponds full of fish. We learned the fish were rainbow trout. You could see the colors of the rainbow on their sides. The ranger let us take handfuls of pellets to feed the trout. When we threw the pellets into the ponds the fish got very excited. Some leaped out of the water. The fish could see the food coming from far away.

When the trout grow to about six inches long they will be scooped up and put inside a tanker truck. The truck will take the fish to nearby rivers and release them. In the river, the fish will have to learn to find their own food. When my dad goes fishing, maybe he will catch some of them and bring them home for our dinner.

## Keiko the Killer Whale

Keiko the whale was captured near Iceland and brought to California. He became a famous performer who did tricks at a theme park. He even starred in a movie! Keiko is an Orca whale. Orcas are called killer whales because they feed on seals.

Keiko was not healthy at the theme park. He was thin and his skin was covered with sores. His body was too big for the tank he lived in. The water was not cold enough for him to be comfortable. He couldn't get enough exercise to be healthy. He was not a happy whale.

Keiko was taken to the Oregon Coast Aquarium to get healthy and eventually be released back into the wild. At the aquarium, he ate the kind of fish he would have caught himself in the ocean. He lived in a very large tank full of cool ocean water. Trainers took care of him and helped him remember what it was like to be wild again.

Keiko ate well and exercised every day. He gained about two tons and got healthy again. When he was well he was moved back to his new home in the ocean. He was so big he had to be flown in a special plane with a pool that took up the entire inside of the plane.

Keiko's new home is in a pen in the ocean, not a tank. Trainers are helping him learn to catch his own fish. Someday they hope he will be released into the wild again. Maybe he will find his original family of Orcas.

## Getting Email

At our house, the mail carrier isn't the only one who brings us messages. Our computer also brings mail. Our family has an email address. All we have to do is turn on the computer and get on the Internet. Our computer tells us if we have new mail.

Email is much faster than regular letters. If I send a regular letter to my cousin who lives in Japan it can take weeks to get an answer. If I email to my cousin, she usually emails back the same day. She lives 4,000 miles away and across the Pacific Ocean but our email messages come and go very quickly.

My cousin is nine years old, just like me. We send email to each other almost every day. We tell each other about our schools, our friends, and our soccer teams. Sometimes we send jokes back and forth. Sometimes we ask questions about what we hear in the news about our countries. Sometimes we play chess with each other using the computer. We think of our moves on separate chess sets and then use email to send our moves back and forth.

My dad and mom send email messages back and forth to Japan as well as to Hawaii, where we have many relatives. Because our relatives live so far apart it is hard for us to get together. If it weren't for email, we wouldn't be able to stay in touch as easily. With email, we can communicate without having to wait for a letter or buy expensive stamps.

## Pots

My family makes pots out of clay at our pueblo. These aren't just any pots, though. They are pretty special. Our pots are on display all over the world. People travel for miles to visit our pueblo and collect our pots. We have shown many of our pots in competitions and we have won lots of awards. Someone even wrote a book about my aunt and the pots that she makes.

I am learning to make our pots from my family. From my grandfather I am learning about the clay. We collect the clay from special areas of the river and process it just right. We have to keep the clay moist and we have to work the clay to force any air bubbles out. If there is an air bubble in the clay the pot will break when it is fired.

We hand build our pots. That means we don't use a wheel or a mold. Instead, we have a picture in our mind of how we want the pot to look. We build the pot layer by layer from the base. We are careful to make the pot match the shape in our mind at each step.

Our pots are decorated with designs that tell a story or have a meaning. If you know how to read the designs, you can learn many important lessons about life. I can tell if a pot was made by one of my relatives from the designs. I can tell who made it, and sometimes I can tell you about when it was made.

## Animal Tracks

I saw a show on TV last night about animal tracks. Animals and people leave their footprints, or tracks, wherever they go. Each track tells a story. A good tracker can tell what kind of animal made the tracks. For instance, members of the dog family have four toes on each foot. A tracker can see the toenail marks in the footprint of a dog. The dog family includes foxes, coyotes, and all pet dogs.

The cat family also has four toes on all four feet but their toenails don't show. That is because cats pull their toenails in when they walk. Cats could be mountain lions, bobcats, or pet cats. Rabbits have four toes on all four feet also. A tracker can tell a rabbit from a cat or dog because a rabbit's back feet are much larger than their front feet.

Animals with five toes on each foot are members of the weasel family. The weasel family includes skunks, otters, and raccoons. Most members of the rodent family have four toes in front and five in back. Rodents could be mice, rats, chipmunks or squirrels.

A person who learns how to read the story in the tracks can use their knowledge to help track people who are lost. A tracker who is really good can tell men from women and boys from girls. A good tracker also can tell the height and weight of a person just from the footprints.

## My Parents

I'm Mexican-American because my parents were both born in Mexico and I was born in America. My parents came to work in the United States before they even finished school. They were just a little older than I am now when they moved here. They got married in Texas and then they moved to California because their families lived there.

My mother and father worked very hard to make our lives better. At first they worked on farms. They both worked seven days a week when there was work and the weather was good. Sometimes the farms that needed workers were far away and they had to travel a long distance. Sometimes it would rain and they couldn't work for days. At other times the crops weren't ready when they arrived. There could be too many people to do the same work and sometimes there was no work at all.

My mother is bilingual because she speaks both English and Spanish. She can understand almost everyone. She was able to get another job because lots of places need employees who can speak English and Spanish.

My father speaks only Spanish, but not for long. He is taking English classes at night so he can find another job. He says English is a difficult language to learn. I'm really proud of my parents.