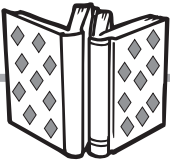


# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	4
Practice Reading Passage: Geothermal Power .....	8
Practice Comprehension Questions .....	9
<b>Standards Correlation</b> .....	10
<b>Science Passages</b>	
Grey Whales: Giants of the Sea .....	14
Lead: The Original Heavy Metal .....	18
Natural Forces .....	22
Storms Lend Scientists a Helping Hand .....	26
Frances Glessner Lee, the First Crime Scene Investigator (CSI) .....	30
<b>Geography Passages</b>	
Oceans: What's Up Down There? .....	34
Ghost Towns .....	38
Bushfires .....	42
A Major Disaster: The Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004 .....	46
Turning Waste into Fuel .....	50
<b>History Passages</b>	
Confucius and the Role of Government .....	54
Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation .....	58
The French and Indian War .....	62
Unsuccessful Explorers .....	66
Errol Flynn and Real Adventure .....	70
<b>English Passages</b>	
Teddy Flack, Olympic Champion (Brief Biography) .....	74
Real Ghost Stories: Washington Irving (Website) .....	78
Pelorus Jack: Famous Dolphin Feared Dead (Newspaper Article) .....	82
A Big Change (Email) .....	86
William Bligh and the Two Mutinies (Magazine Feature) .....	90
<b>Answer Sheets</b> .....	94
<b>Answer Key</b> .....	96



## Bushfires

Humans have always had an uneasy relationship with fire. Fire can be our friend or foe. As a friend, fire offers warmth, light and heat for cooking. As a foe, an out-of-control fire can cause ruin and death.

Bushfires have been part of Australia for millions of years. Many Australian plants have evolved with fire. Fire is a natural part of the life of some plants. They grow best after an area has been scorched. Aboriginal Australians used controlled fires. This was to start new growth and clear out areas.

It is probably because of fires that the gumtree is found so widely over our country. It contains oils in its leaves. They make it burn better than other trees. It might even explode. Scientists think this might be a way of taking over from plants that aren't as good at coming back from fires. Some plants have shoots that only sprout after a fire. They do better when fires happen and are not **suppressed**. Others have seeds that are fire-proof. Some even have seeds that are triggered by fire!

Bushfires might be natural. But today they are often disastrous for people and animals. Every summer Australia is in danger of bushfires. They destroy lives and forests. They rage into towns and outer suburbs of major cities. Fires are most common in the north of Australia. But it is the south-east that is most in danger every summer. This area is home to the worst wildfires in the world. It is also the area where the highest numbers of people live.

Bushfires happen every year in summer. They can be caused deliberately or accidentally. People may have smaller fires for cooking that get out of control. They might leave chemicals unattended on a very hot day. Cigarettes or matches can start raging fires. On hot and dry days small fires start as single sparks. They can spread for kilometres.



There have been many bad bushfires. The Red Tuesday bushfires hit South Gippsland in Victoria in 1898. They killed 12 people. They also destroyed more than 2000 buildings. Years later the Ash Wednesday bushfires occurred. They swept through Victoria and South Australia in 1983. 75 people were killed and more than 2000 were injured.

The worst bushfires in Australian history so far took place in 2009. We call this event Black Saturday. Victoria had much hotter weather than usual. This combined with over a decade of drought. These factors created multiple fires. They were overwhelming and unstoppable. In total 171 people died as a result of the Black Saturday fires. 414 people were injured. Many more lost their homes. Entire towns were destroyed as the fires raged.

Bushfires are sadly a fact of life in Australia. But we can do things to stop them spreading. Not all of us can be the brave fire-fighters who rush into danger to save our homes and lives. We can all use common sense and care to try and stop fires starting. Bushfires might be a natural event. The tragedies they often cause can be lessened or prevented if we think and work together.



## Bushfires

Humans have always had an uneasy relationship with fire. Fire can be our friend or foe. As a friend, fire offers warmth, light and heat for cooking. As a foe, an out-of-control fire can cause ruin and death.

Bushfires have been part of Australia for millions of years. Many Australian plants have evolved with fire. Fire is a natural part of the life cycle. They grow best after an area has been scorched. Aboriginal Australians used controlled fires to start new growth and clear out areas.

It is probably because of fires that the eucalypt, a tree that is the symbol of Australia, is found so widely over our country. It contains oils in its leaves that make it burn better than other trees. They might even explode. Scientists think this might be a way of taking over from plants that aren't as good at coming back from fires. Some plants have shoots that only sprout after a fire. They do better when fires occur and aren't **suppressed**. Others have seeds that are fire-proof. Some even have seeds that are triggered by fire!

Bushfires might be natural. But today they are often disastrous for the people and animals touched by them. Every summer Australia is in danger of bushfires. They destroy lives and forests. They rage into towns and outer suburbs of major cities. Fires are most common in the north of Australia. But it is the south-east that is most in danger every summer. This area is home to the worst and most destructive wildfires in the world. It is also the area in which the highest numbers of people live.

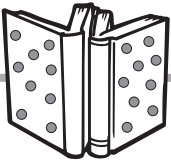
Bushfires happen every year in summer. They can be caused deliberately or accidentally. People may have smaller fires for cooking that get out of control. They might leave chemicals unattended on a very hot day. Cigarettes or matches can start raging fires. On hot and dry days, small fires that start as single sparks can spread for kilometres.



Unfortunately there have been many famous examples of horrific bushfires in Australia's history. The Red Tuesday bushfires hit South Gippsland in Victoria in 1898. They killed 12 people. They also destroyed more than 2000 buildings. Years later the Ash Wednesday bushfires swept through Victoria and South Australia in 1983. They killed 75 people and injured more than 2000.

The worst bushfires in Australian history so far took place in 2009. We call this event Black Saturday. Much hotter weather than usual combined with over a decade of drought in Victoria. These factors created multiple fires that were overwhelming and unstoppable. In total, 171 people died as a result of the Black Saturday fires. 414 were injured. Many more lost their homes. Entire towns were destroyed as the fires raged.

Bushfires are sadly a fact of life in Australia. But we can do things to stop them spreading. Not all of us can be the brave fire-fighters who rush into danger to save our homes and lives. We can all use common sense and care to try and stop fires starting. Bushfires might be a natural event. The tragedies that they often cause can be lessened or prevented if we think and work together.



## Bushfires

Humans have always had an uneasy relationship with fire. Fire can be our friend or foe. As a friend, fire offers warmth, light and heat for cooking. As a foe, an out-of-control fire can cause ruin and death.

Bushfires have been part of Australia for millions of years. Many Australian plants have evolved with fire. Fire is a natural part of the life cycle. They grow best after an area has been scorched. Aboriginal Australians used controlled fires to promote new growth and clear out areas.

It's probably because of fires that the eucalypt, a tree that is the symbol of Australia, is found so widely over our country. It contains oils in its leaves that make it much more flammable than other trees and might even make it explode. Scientists think this might be a way of taking over from plants that aren't as good at recovering from fires. Some plants have shoots that only sprout after a fire. They do better when fires occur and aren't **suppressed**. Others have seeds that are fire-proof, or even seeds that are triggered by fire!

Bushfires might be natural, but today they're often disastrous for the people and animals touched by them. Every summer Australia is in danger of bushfires that destroy lives and forests and rage into towns and outer suburbs of major cities. While fires are most common in the north of Australia, it's the south-east that is most in danger every summer. This area is prone to the worst and most destructive wildfires in the world. It's also the area in which the highest numbers of people live.

Bushfires happen every year in summer. They can be caused deliberately or accidentally. People may have smaller fires for cooking that get out of control. They might leave chemicals unattended on a very hot day. Cigarettes or matches can start raging fires. On hot and dry days, small fires that start as single sparks can spread for kilometres.

Unfortunately there have been many famous examples of horrific bushfires in Australia's history. The Red Tuesday bushfires hit South Gippsland in Victoria in 1898. They killed 12 people, but destroyed more than 2000 buildings. Years later, the Ash Wednesday bushfires swept through

Victoria and South Australia in 1983. They killed 75 people and injured more than 2000.



The worst bushfire in Australian history so far took place in 2009. We call this event **Black Saturday**. Much hotter weather than usual combined with over a decade of drought to create multiple fires that were overwhelming and unstoppable across Victoria. In total, 171 people died as a result of the Black Saturday fires. 414 were injured. Many more lost their homes. Entire towns were destroyed as the fires raged.

Bushfires are sadly a fact of life in Australia. But we can do things to stop them spreading. Not all of us can be the brave fire-fighters who rush into danger to save our homes and lives. We can all use common sense and care to try and stop fires starting. Bushfires might be a natural event. The tragedies that they often cause can be lessened or prevented if we think carefully and work together.





## Bushfires

**Directions: Darken the best answer choice.**

1. Fires are most common in the
  - (A) state of South Australia.
  - (B) Gippsland area.
  - (C) south-east of Australia.
  - (D) north of Australia.

---

2. The word **suppressed** means
  - (A) stopped.
  - (B) encouraged.
  - (C) illegal.
  - (D) terrifying.

---

3. Which event happened last?
  - (A) The Red Tuesday fires killed 12 people.
  - (B) The Black Saturday bushfires killed 171 people.
  - (C) Aboriginal people used fire to promote growth and clear areas.
  - (D) The Ash Wednesday fires swept through South Australia and Victoria.

---

4. A bushfire is more likely to occur
  - (A) on a hot, humid day.
  - (B) during hot, dry days, especially during periods of drought.
  - (C) as a result of chemicals exploding.
  - (D) during a storm.

---

5. Eucalypts (or gumtrees) are probably so flammable because
  - (A) they don't have any oils in their leaves.
  - (B) they cause drought.
  - (C) they have fire-proof seeds.
  - (D) this helps them take over land from trees that aren't as good at surviving fires.

---

6. Bushfires in Australia
  - (A) only happen due to humans starting them.
  - (B) are most common in cities.
  - (C) will always occur, but can be controlled or lessened if we plan and work together.
  - (D) happen every year, regardless of the weather or human factors.