Text 11 (Silent Reading, Form A, Story 6), 60 words, 370 characters

Much of our understanding about sharks comes from the discoveries of Eugenie Clark. Eugenie is a scientist who studies the behavior of sharks. Wearing a diving helmet and oxygen tank, she has observed numerous kinds of sharks in their natural environment. As the director of a marine laboratory, she has also designed a project for studying these creatures in captivity.

Text 12 (Silent Reading, Form B, Story 6), 56 words, 344 characters

Civilian airplane pilots have many important jobs. They transport passengers, freight, and mail from one city to another. In emergencies they are called upon to make dangerous rescues in land and sea accidents and drop food and supplies where people or herds are starving. Pilots also carry out special tasks such as spraying and dusting crops.

Text 13 (Oral Reading, Form B, Story 7), 55 words, 330 characters

All over the world farmers face many difficult problems. Fruits, vegetables, and other plants are frequently attacked by insects and diseases that can wipe out an entire crop. Farmers attempt to control these pests by using chemicals, but these poisons can make our food unsafe to eat. They can also harm useful insects and birds.

Text 14 (Silent Reading, Form A, Story 7), 61 words, 359 characters

In the thirteenth century the people of Europe were ignorant about many remote areas of the world. China, a vast and powerful country in Asia, was uncharted territory on the Europeans’ map. One of the first European travelers to visit this distant region was Marco Polo. He learned several languages spoken in China and served its great rulers for many years.

Text 15 (Silent Reading, Form B, Story 7), 66 words, 378 characters

The life of a movie star is rarely as exciting as we imagine. Most stars spend countless hours studying their lines, taking acting lessons, and practicing other skills necessary for a career in show business, such as singing and dancing. And for certain roles, a star may be required to learn to ride a horse or play the piano. During filming, stars have an exhausting schedule.

Text 16 (Silent Reading, Form A, Story 8), 54 words, 361 characters

The applauding spectators fell silent. They had cheered the dauntless Warriors through eight hard-fought innings against their fiercest rivals. Only one run was required to defeat the Pythons, whose unbeaten record had given them a reputation as formidable opponents. Another winning game would clench their title as champions and earn them the precious trophy.

Text 17 (Silent Reading, Form B, Story 8), 55 words, 378 characters

As Teresa awaited liftoff, she reflected on the stiff training program that had prepared her for her first space flight. Unlike most career astronauts, Teresa had been selected for the flight because of her physics background rather than her aviation experience. She had nevertheless been required to learn spacecraft design, celestial navigation, and communications procedures.

Text 18 (Oral Reading, Form A, Story 9), 65 words, 380 characters

The gale’s fury began to intensify as Winnie lugged the splintered rowboat onto the barren reef. Her younger brother had managed to stumble to shore through the churning surf, despite the gash on his leg and possibly a fractured wrist. His dim outline was huddled against a heap of debris above the waterline—the dismal remnant of another vessel that met defeat near these shoals.

Text 19 (Oral Reading, Form B, Story 9), 63 words, 389 characters

Mark was delighted to obtain his deputy sheriff’s badge, but now he nervously pondered the difficult undertaking ahead. As his first assignment, he had been appointed to escort a prisoner to the authorities in Preston, the county seat and the site of the impending trial. The cunning prisoner had previously eluded the law and led state troopers in hot pursuit before finally surrendering.

Text 20 (Silent Reading, Form A, Story 9), 69 words, 383 characters

The biologist scanned the mouth of the cavern, which harbored colonies of a rare fruit-eating bat. On this particular outing he hoped to snare a few specimens for his study of the bat’s role in seed dispersal. At the entrance of the main chamber was a stagnant pool in which untold numbers of bats had deposited morsels of fruit as they made the daily pilgrimage back to their roost.

Text 21 (Silent Reading, Form B, Story 9), 61 words, 354 characters

For days the zoologist had scoured the protected area for a coyote den. Unless she could stake one out for field study, it would be impossible to document her theory that a coyote is a social creature staunchly devoted to its family and clan, not the loner of popular imagination. The wildlife sanctuary had seemed the ideal setting for tracking coyotes.

Text 22 (Oral Reading, Form A, Story 10), 56 words, 385 characters

The entomologist had contemplated the hazards of working with this lethal strain of honeybee. These bees were high-strung and aggressive, quick to incite the entire colony when antagonized. Their excitability often provoked them to mass attacks that resulted in fatalities. Yet they produced extravagant quantities of honey, sometimes double that of their more docile European cousins.

Text 24 (Silent Reading, Form A, Story 10), 49 words, 338 characters

The folk dances of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century America represented the retention of Old World dances that had been imported by the colonists. Although most of these dances have passed into oblivion, recognizable traces of this tradition persist in secluded regions that have retained their ancestral character, such as Appalachia.

Text 25 (Silent Reading, Form B, Story 10), 53 words, 366 characters

The function of children’s games has recently attained importance as a subject of investigation in the social sciences. Games, particularly those that accentuate rhyme, rhythm, or dramatic action, cater to an innate need to engage in imaginative and expressive behavior. Games likewise provide a socially acceptable outlet for excess energy, tension, and aggression.