7th Grade Passages

Beginning of Year (BOY) Student Packet

Passage 1 Laura

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Passage 3 Spreading Wildflowers

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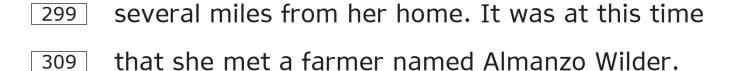
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Laura

Laura Ingalls Wilder is a famous author. She wrote children's books about pioneer life in the 8 late 19th Century. Laura was born in 1867 in a log 16 house in Wisconsin. She was the second daughter 27 of Charles and Caroline Ingalls. Laura had an 35 older sister named Mary. They were very close. 43 The Ingalls family moved frequently. They went 51 wherever their father could find a job. Shortly 58 after Laura's birth, the family moved to Missouri. 66 A few years later, they moved to Kansas to start 74 their own farm. A third daughter, Carrie, was 84 born there. When Laura was 13, they left Kansas 92 101 and returned to Wisconsin to be near family.

- The girls were happy to be there, but their father
- longed to farm again. So, four years later, in 1874,

- the family moved to Walnut Grove, Minnesota. They 129 built a house and farmed the land. The three girls 137 had many adventures there. But the family suffered 147 many tragedies as well. During their first year 155 163 there, Charles had grown a good wheat crop. It was destroyed by grasshoppers. This was repeated 172 the next year as well. The family was blessed by 179 a baby boy in 1875, but he died of an illness at 189 only 9 months. The family suffered yet another 201 209 tragedy when Mary lost her eyesight as a result of a stroke. That same year, Charles took a job with 219 the railroad. They moved to De Smet in the Dakota 229 Territories. When the railroad job was finished, they 239 acquired some land. He began to farm again. A 247 harsh winter made farming difficult that first year. 256 But they persevered and were able to save enough 264 money to send Mary to a school for the blind. 273
- When Laura was 15, she earned her teaching certificate. She began teaching at a small school



- They married three years later. They had a healthy
- baby girl named Rose. They had many misfortunes
- as well, however. Severe storms ruined their
- 341 crops. This forced them into debt. Almanzo worked
- 349 hard in the fields, but he got sick and became
- 359 crippled. During this time, Laura was pregnant
- 366 with their second child. He died shortly after birth,
- unnamed. Soon after, their house burned down
- when something in the kitchen caught fire.
- The family then moved to Florida, where the
- warm conditions improved Almanzo's health.
- They eventually returned to De Smet. But,
- in 1894, they relocated to Missouri. Here
- they would spend the rest of their lives.
- They bought a farm there and prospered.

431	Laura was a great storyteller. Her daughter
438	Rose convinced her to write her stories so that
447	other children could enjoy them too. Laura did
455	so. In all, she wrote seven children's books.
463	These comprised her Little House series. They
470	have been widely read and admired. She and
478	Almanzo spent the rest of their lives at their
487	Missouri farm. Laura died in 1957, at the age of
497	90. Their farm is now open for people to visit.
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A Wonderful Friendship

Helen Keller was a young girl who couldn't

see or hear. Alexander Graham Bell was

the famous scientist who invented the

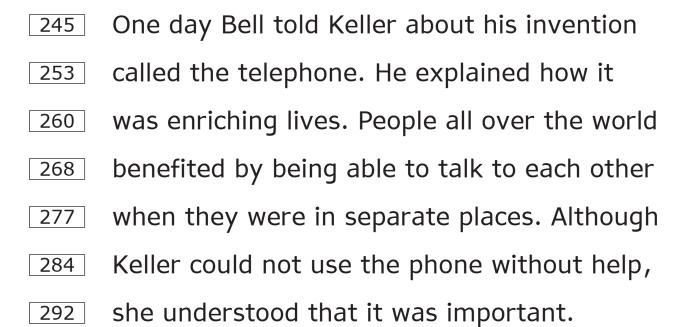
telephone. These two famous people not

only knew each other, but together they also
opened up new worlds of conversation.

- Helen Keller was born in 1880. When she was a baby, she lost her sight and hearing. Because of her inability to hear, she did not learn how to speak.

 Even so, it was clear that she was an intelligent child and was eager to learn. Keller's family did everything they could to find a way to educate her.
- When Helen Keller was six years old, her parents took her to see Alexander Graham Bell.

- 116 He was well known for his inventions. He was
- also a teacher of deaf people. He considered
- teaching to be his most important work.
- Bell recognized Keller's intelligence. At his
- suggestion her parents hired a private teacher
- 153 named Anne Sullivan. She worked with Keller
- every day. Through her persistence Sullivan was
- able to teach Keller words and their meanings.
- 175 With a great deal of constant work, Sullivan
- taught Keller how to read and write. One of
- the first letters Keller wrote was to Bell.
- Bell encouraged Keller to learn as much as she
- could. Sometimes they would go on rides or
- visit the zoo. They also shared a love of books.
- Bell would tell her stories by using his fingers
- to spell the letters of words in her hand.



- Bell opened a school for deaf students and formed an information center to help people understand the needs and abilities of deaf people. Keller was very interested in Bell's work with deaf children.
- 331 Keller had worked hard and set goals for herself.

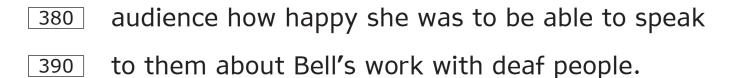
 340 Because she wanted to help Bell by telling

 348 other people about his work, she decided to

 356 take lessons to learn to speak. When she felt

 365 comfortable speaking in public, she gave a

 372 speech at Bell's information center. She told the



- Bell's invention of the telephone helped hearing people talk to each other. His teaching helped deaf people talk to each other and to the hearing world. His support and instruction helped Keller express herself by writing and even speaking. Helen Keller went on to finish college and became a well-known writer.
- When she wrote a book about her life, Helen Keller dedicated it to Alexander Graham Bell. This was a symbol of their lasting friendship.

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Spreading Wildflowers

Claudia Taylor was born in Karnack, Texas, in 1912.

As a young child she was given the nickname Lady
Bird. She grew up in the country, and it was there
that her lifelong love of nature began. Throughout
her childhood and adult years, she has enjoyed
being outdoors, looking for the beautiful flowers
that grow naturally in open fields.

In 1929 the state of Texas started a wildflower program. The highway department waited for the flowers to go to seed before they were mowed.

Then the seeds would spread and grow into plants the next year. Lady Bird enjoyed exploring the countryside in search of different wildflowers. She continued to do so after moving to Austin in 1930

- to attend the University of Texas. Four years later
- 127 Lady Bird married Lyndon B. Johnson.
- In 1964 Lyndon Johnson was running for President
- of the United States. As he and his wife traveled
- around the country, Lady Bird saw beauty as
- well as blight. Some areas suffered from neglect
- and ugliness. When Lady Bird's husband won the
- election, she wanted to do something to make the
- nation's capital look more beautiful. The following
- 191 year she found a way to do that.
- Lady Bird helped set up the Committee for a More
- Beautiful Capital. She was chosen to head the
- 217 group of volunteers. They met once a month at
- the White House to discuss ideas and make plans.
- They decided their program could be successful
- 242 only if people in the community were willing to get
- involved. To attract attention, volunteers planted
- flowers around the city in hundreds of places that

- many people passed each day. They encouraged businesses to plant grass, shrubs, and flowers.

 They organized cleanups and fix-up projects in neighborhoods. They also tried to improve school yards and playgrounds. The committee gave awards each year to neighborhoods, businesses, and public spaces.
- The ideas of the committee quickly spread across 311 319 the country. Some states began setting up their own programs to preserve flowers and to plant new 327 ones. Thanks to Lady Bird, many of these programs 336 included wildflowers. In the state of Texas, people 345 continued to strengthen the program that had been 353 adopted almost 40 years before the committee 361 368 began its work.
- The Johnsons returned to Texas in 1969. Lady Bird wanted to do something to encourage more people to plant wildflowers. She knew that little was known

about growing these flowers in gardens and that
more research needed to be done.

In 1970 Lady Bird began a project to make the city 411 of Austin more lovely. A variety of colorful flowers 422 and trees were planted along the banks of a major 431 river. Trails for hiking and biking were also added. 441 This project helped inspire the idea for building a 450 center for studying native plants. In 1982 Lady 459 Bird gave a large sum of money and 60 acres of 467 land near Austin to build the National Wildflower 478 Research Center. The purpose of the center was to 486 495 learn about wildflowers and share new information with interested people everywhere. In 1998 Lady 502 Bird was honored for her tireless efforts to make 509 our nation more beautiful. The name of the center 518 was changed to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower 527 535 Center.

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