

Determining the Facts: Grade 4 From 'Little Wars' to Merry-go-Rounds

Overview:

Students will read the document and demonstrate understanding by constructing a timeline of important events from the reading.

Essential Questions:

- Where did the idea of the Empire State Carousel come from?
- What are the major places and events in the history of the carousel?

New York State Standards:

- Social Studies
 - Standard 1: The study of New York State and United States history requires an analysis of the development of American culture, its diversity and multicultural context, and the ways people are unified by many values, practices and traditions.
 - Standard 2: World History
 - Standard 3: Geography
- English Language Arts
 - Standard 1: Language for Information and Understanding
 - Standard 3: Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation
- The Arts
 - Standard 2 Knowing and using Arts materials and resources

Materials:

- Copies of the reading
- Copies of assessment worksheet
- Copies of reading diagram
- Copies of Vocabulary list
- Blank paper, 11x14
- Colored writing tools (pencils, pens, markers, highlighters, etc) per student
- Dictionaries

Procedure

- The teacher opens the lesson by introducing the Empire State Carousel. It is recommended that the *Getting Started* video and questions be used for this introduction. The following vocabulary lesson may be used as part of the introduction.
- The teacher will distribute copies of the reading to each student.
- The teacher then will give the students time to complete the reading. The teacher will ask the students to fill in words they associate with the main ideas on the lines provided on the Reading Diagram and definitions of words found on their vocabulary list. Not all of the words on the list will be found in this one reading. Students should use the same list for all three readings to allow them to refer back to previous vocabulary.
- The teacher will instruct students that as they finish reading, they should go back and underline important dates mentioned in the reading.
- When all students have finished the reading, the teacher will explain the timeline activity.
 - Each student will be given a piece of 11x14 blank white paper.
 - The teacher will instruct the students to draw a line down the middle of the paper the long way.
 - Students will then be instructed to place each date from the reading on the timeline. For each date, a hatch mark should be drawn across the long line; the date should be placed above the line and the name of the event under the line. The teacher may want to advise the students to collect all the dates before starting to write on their timeline so as to space the dates evenly.
 - The teacher will instruct students to decorate their timeline with drawings of the ideas and machines mentioned in the reading.
- The teacher then will distribute the materials and allow the students time to complete their timelines.

Evaluation

- The teacher may use the timeline or the included worksheet as an assessment for this reading.

Determining the Facts Reading 1: From “Little Wars” to Merry-go-rounds

The history of the carousel has been long and changing. The first evidence of carousels is relief carvings, which date back almost 1,500 years. Carousel-like contraptions were used around the world. Places like Mexico, India, and China used them long before they became popular in Europe and America. For example, the Aztecs (from south-central Mexico) had an entire ceremony, called the Game of the Flyers, based on the use of one of these structures. Individuals dressed like birds of prey and were hung by their heels, head down, from an eighty-foot pole. The ropes were wound tightly around the pole then let lose, sending the rider spiraling outward like flying birds.

In Europe and America, carousels originated to aid in military started as a way to train the military. In fact, the word carousel or *carosello* means “little war” and can be traced to twelfth-century Arabian games of horsemanship. Riders would play a game that involved tossing a perfumed clay ball from one rider to another. The object of the game was to catch the ball without letting it break. When the ball broke it spilled the sweet, “unmanly” perfume contained inside. By the 1500s, this game had become huge tournaments in Europe called “Carrousel.” The most famous of these was *Le Grande Carrousel* held by King Louis XIV of France in 1662. A modern carousel still stands on this location.

Carousels started being used as a ride in the 1600s. French noblemen who wanted to become knights trained for spearing contests using an early version of the modern carousel. They “rode” legless wooden horses that were attached to a center pole. As they rode in circles around the pole they practiced spearing through small hanging hoops. These early carousels eventually became into a popular form of entertainment for peasants and nobles alike. A horse, mule, or man that pushed, pulled, or cranked a center mechanism powered these early models. Carousels continued to become more ride-like as time went on. In the 1860s Frederick Savage patented both a portable steam engine and the overhead gears. The engine turned the carousel, while the gears moved the animals up-and-down.

In America, early nineteenth century wheelwrights, carpenters, and blacksmiths built carousels in their off-season. These early American carousels were often made of log-like horses hung from the center pole by chains. These rides were often placed in picnic groves in rural areas of the United States. As early as 1800, advertisements were found for horse “circle” rides in cities like Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, and Boston. As the country grew, new immigrants brought their carousel-building and carving skills to America. They brought knowledge of carousels from their home countries in Europe. This led to a “golden age” for carousels in the United States. Men like Gustav Dentzel, Charles Loof, and Allan Herschell created new and beautiful hand-made carousels for amusement parks across the country. The “golden age” came to an end when factories started mass-producing carousel animals in the 1920s, especially after World War II.

The Empire State Carousel at The Farmers’ Museum is hand-made like the carousels of the “golden age.” Master carver Gerry Holzman built the Carousel with the help of over 1,000 volunteers. They all believed in the artistic and historic value of handmade carousels. The Empire State Carousel is a complex piece of folk art that stands for the state of New York and its people. The Empire State Carousel is made up of twenty-four carved animals, all native to New York, twenty-three portraits of famous New Yorkers, and eight art panels representing different regions and important events in New York’s history. It is one of only forty three carousels in New York.

Name: _____

From “Little Wars” to Merry-go-Rounds Questions

Answer each question in complete sentences.

1. What other cultures created art or games similar to modern carousels?

2. Where did the word “carousel” come from?

3. What were early carousels in Europe like?

4. How were carousels in America first made and used?

5. Where did the idea for the Empire State Carousel come from?

Name: ANSWER KEY

From 'Little Wars' to Merry-go-Rounds Questions

Answer each question in complete sentences.

1. What other cultures created art or games similar to modern carousels?

Mexico, India, China, Arabia, France, (also acceptable is Europe)

2. Where did the word "carousel" come from?

Carousel means little war in Arabian

3. What were early carousels in Europe like?

Answers may include: Carousels were used to train the military; carousels were big tournaments based on the Arabian games; and riders rode legless wooden horses around a center pole to practice spearing through small hanging hoops.

4. How were carousels in America first made and used?

Early American Carousels were made by immigrants to earn money. They were used in early versions of amusement parks, like Coney Island.

5. Where did the idea for the Empire State Carousel come from?

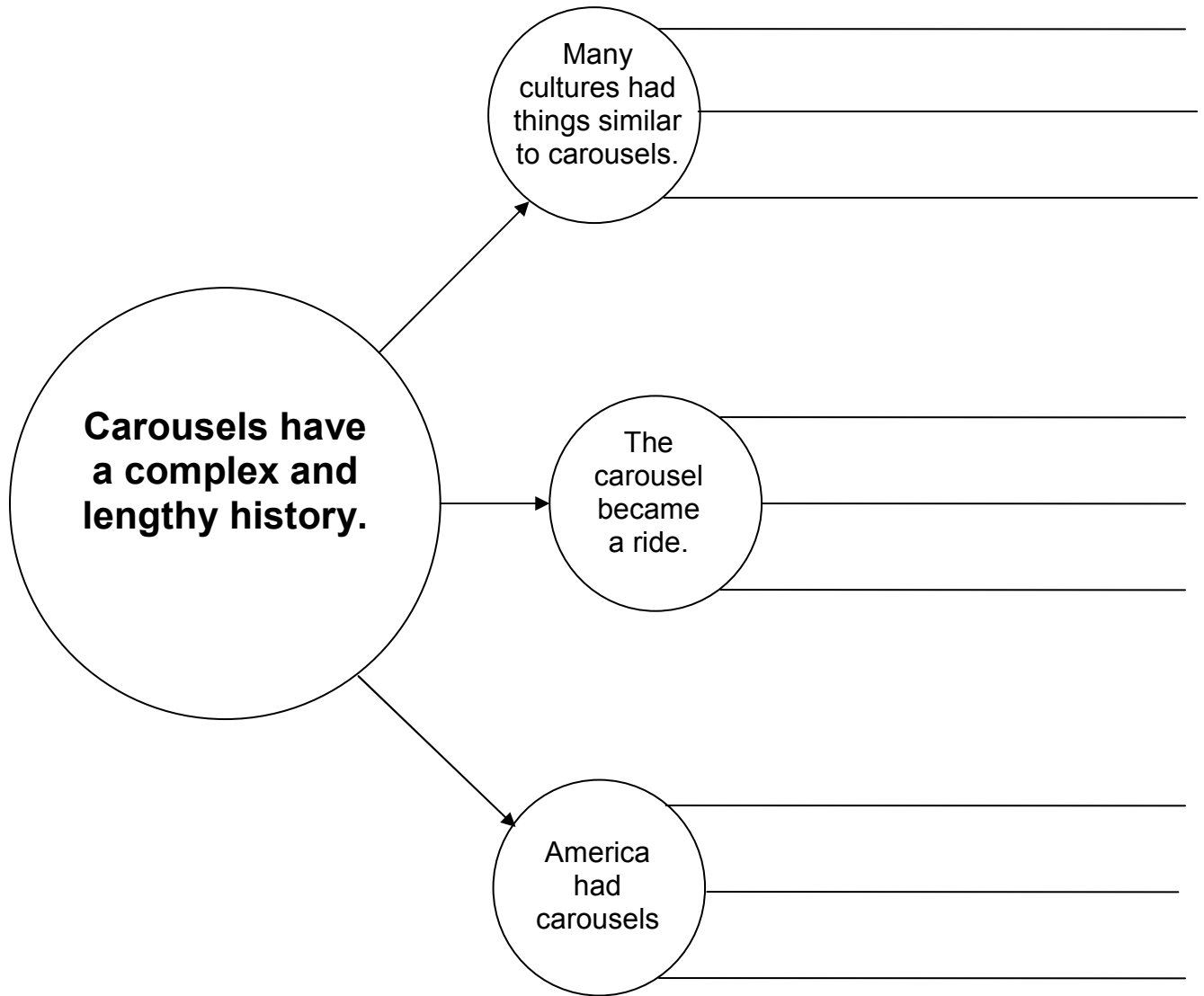
The Empire State Carousel began with Gerry Holzman and spread to many others as a way of preserving the ideas of handmade carousels, New York and its people.

Name: _____

Determining the Facts

Reading 1: From 'Little Wars' to Merry-go-Rounds

Graphic organizers can help you break down big ideas in your readings. On this graphic organizer fill in words or phrases from the readings that support the idea in the bubble.

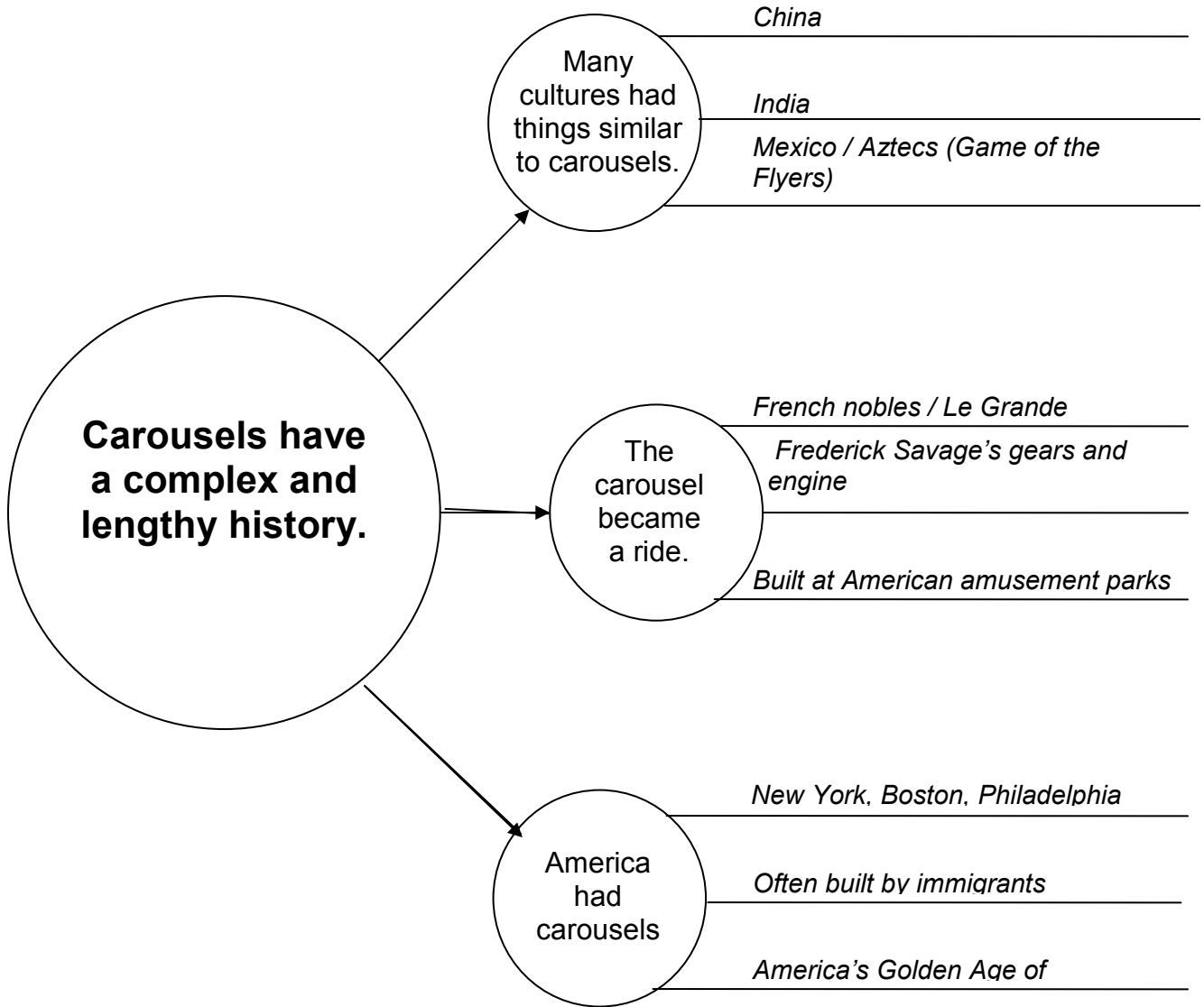


Name: ANSWER KEY

Determining the Facts

Reading 1: From 'Little Wars' to Merry-go-Rounds

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