Chapter 1
Long ago, there was a man named William Tell. He lived a peaceful life with his son, Walter, but William also knew how to fight.

William was strong and capable with a sword as well as a skilled marksman.

Marksmen were known as the best archers. William Tell was the best in the land. His reputation was well-known. William never missed a shot with his bow and arrow.

William was a good man who only used his skills for good things. He always tried to do what he thought was right.

Unfortunately, the man who ruled the land was not like William. The ruler, Albrecht Gessler, was greedy and cruel. He was also known for having very little skill as a marksman.

The king had granted Albrecht Gessler the right to rule over the territory. Albrecht was too enchanted with his own power to be a good ruler. His biggest desire was to be obeyed by all of the people in the territory.
Chapter 2

One morning, Albrecht decided the people should treat him as more than just a ruler. He wanted them to show respect, even when he wasn’t present.

He went into the center of the town with his servants.

"Put a pole up in the middle of the square," the cruel man commanded.

His servants did not want to defy him. They rolled the pole to the middle of the square.

"No, you fools! Put the pole upright with one end in the ground." His anger was obvious. Spittle flew from his mouth as he yelled.

Scared, the servants quickly corrected their mistake. It was a difficult task to drive the heavy pole into the ground. It was made from a large trunk of a tree that had all the branches removed.

Tired and sweaty, the servants stood back. Under Albrecht's orders, one of the servants climbed the pole and placed the ruler’s hat at the top.

Once the hat was in place, Albrecht made his servants gather the entire town around the pole.

"As your lord and master, you must always bow and pay respect to my hat whenever you pass by this pole."

The people did not like the new law, but they could not fight it.

Every day as people passed the hat, they would bow. Even if it was raining, they got drenched by the rain as they bowed to the hat. If they did not bow, they risked being punished.

William Tell was not like everyone else. He would not pay his respects to such a cruel leader. William refused to bow to the hat.

At first he simply avoided going near the hat. It was easy to devise a new path to almost anywhere in the town.
Chapter 3
One day William and his son had to go to the palace, which meant he had to go past the hat.

William had to make a choice.

As William's son began to bow at the hat, William held him up.

"But we must bow," his son exclaimed.

"No, it is wrong to follow the orders of such a cruel leader. I will not willingly do what is wrong," William pronounced loudly.

They continued walking to the castle. The news of William's defiance reached the castle before William and his son.

William and Walter were met with hostility at the castle. Both were thrown into prison.

Albrecht was furious. William had not only defied his law, but he had also done so very publicly.

Chapter 4
The next morning, William was brought before Albrecht.

"Why do you defy the law?" Albrecht asked.
William answered very simply, "I have chosen to defy the law because it is wrong."

Albrecht began shaking because he was so angry. He wanted to get even with William and devised a plan to embarrass him publicly. "If you will not bow to the hat, then you must complete a public challenge, or else both you and your son will face execution."

"You must prove your skill as a marksman. You must shoot an apple that sits on the top of your son's head. You have one shot."

Albrecht and his court went to the field in front of the castle. William and Walter had a few moments together.

William explained to Walter what was about to happen.

"I believe in you, Father," Walter said bravely. "I will be safe."

Walter was then taken to a tree. An apple was placed on his head.

William took a deep breath. He removed an arrow from the quiver and focused on the apple.

Clearing his mind, William shot the arrow. The arrow sliced the apple, but did not harm Walter. William ran toward Walter and gave him a hug. William was happy that he had stood up to the evil ruler.

**Question 1:**

What did William hit with his arrow?

- a hat
- the castle wall
- an apple
- a loaf of bread
Question 2:
What is the moral of "The Tale of William Tell"?

- A king can do whatever he wants.
- Stand up for your beliefs.
- Always obey your rulers.
- Everyone should learn to fight.

Question 3:
Who is the evil ruler in this story?

- Walter
- Adam
- William
- Albrecht

Question 4:
Read this sentence.

*Marksmen* were known as the best archers.

What does *marksmen* mean in this sentence?

- people who shoot with great aim
- men who follow a man named Mark
- men that wear a red mark
- the king's army
Question 5:
In which chapter are William and his son thrown into prison?
- chapter 1
- chapter 3
- chapter 2
- chapter 4

Question 6:
Who is the man dressed in purple?
- Walter
- William
- a servant
- Albrecht Gessler

Lesson Topic: Was William Tell Real?
The legend of William Tell takes place in the village of Altdorf in Switzerland. The people in Altdorf were not free. They were ruled by a tyrant.

According to legend, in 1307 a bailiff named Gessler hung his hat on a pole in the town square. Gessler ordered all men to bow before his hat, but Tell refused.

As punishment, Tell had to shoot an apple off his own son's head with an arrow. He succeeded! Eventually, he killed Gessler. This started a revolution.
William Tell is Switzerland's most famous folk hero. His legend has inspired many people to fight for freedom.

Was he a real person? We don't know for sure, but probably not. Our information comes from official records of the time, and from songs and stories that were passed down from generation to generation.

In the legend, William Tell performed his heroic deed in 1307. But there is no record of a person named William Tell living in Altdorf at that time. There is also no record of a bailiff being killed.

In fact, the first record of the event is not until 1470, more than 150 years later. In that account, the hero was known as Der Thall. The first songs about the event appeared in 1474, but it wasn't until 1507 that he was given the first name of William.

There is more evidence that William Tell was not real. Similar legends have been found in other countries. In the Danish version, the event takes place in the 12th century, about 200 years before the story of William Tell.

Why did the legend of William Tell develop in Switzerland? The Swiss people probably needed a hero to inspire them to start a revolution, so they borrowed the tale and changed a few details. This made the story more appropriate for their culture.

While William Tell may not be real, he is still a powerful symbol of heroism, freedom, and democracy. His inspiration to the Swiss people is very much real!

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Question 1:

According to the legend, when did William Tell defy the bailiff?

- 1470
- 1307
- 1474
- 1507
Question 2:
What is the main idea of this article?

- Only Swedish people believe in William Tell.
- William Tell was most likely a fictional person.
- William Tell is a real historical figure.
- William Tell was actually a villain.

Question 3:
Why is it important that the first record of William Tell comes 150 years after the story supposedly happened?

- It shows that details were added later on.
- It means that the story happened much later than people thought.
- It means William Tell was at least 150 years old.
- It means that William Tell's story was kept hidden for a long time.

Question 4:
In the following passage, what does tyrant mean?

At that time, the people were not free. They were ruled by a tyrant.

- a good king
- a cruel or unjust ruler
- a smart servant
- an archer
Question 5:

Based on the picture, how might Swiss people feel about William Tell?

- They think William Tell is greedy.
- They don't care about William Tell.
- They believe William Tell was very rich.
- They respect William Tell.

Question 6:

Why would the legend of William Tell inspire people to start a revolution?

- because William Tell founded a new country
- because the legend shows that all rulers are evil
- because people become angry when they find out William Tell wasn't real
- because William Tell stood up against an evil ruler

Lesson Topic: Famous Apples

Famous Apples
Written by Krista Garver
Believe it or not, apples have a special place in many cultures around the world. They have starring roles in many popular stories. Here is a quick look at some of the world’s most famous apples.

**William Tell**

According to Swiss legend, William Tell refused to bow to a tyrant. As punishment, he had to shoot an apple off his son's head with an arrow. Tell was an expert archer. He succeeded at the challenge. Later, he even killed the tyrant. His actions sparked a fight for independence. William Tell is a symbol of heroism and freedom. His story has inspired people around the world to fight against tyrants.

**Isaac Newton**

Sir Isaac Newton is one of the most famous scientists of all time. He explained the idea of gravity. People say that the idea of gravity came to Newton when he was sitting under an apple tree. He watched an apple fall to the ground and wondered why it fell down instead of up. He proposed the theory of gravity.
It turned out Newton was right. Gravity explains forces on Earth and the movement of the planets. That one apple changed the entire course of science.

**Apple Inc.**

Today, one of the most recognizable apples isn't really an apple at all! When we hear the word *apple*, many of us think of computers. Apple Inc., then known as Apple Computer, Inc., was founded in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Ronald Wayne.

![Apple logo](image)

That's a pretty impressive resumé for the apple. Can you think of any other famous apples?

**Question 1:**

Which scientist invented the theory of gravity after seeing an apple fall to the ground?

- Thomas Edison
- Isaac Newton
- Albert Einstein
- Niels Bohr

**Question 2:**

What is the main idea of “Famous Apples”?

- Apples are no more special than any other fruit.
- Apples have been a powerful symbol throughout history.
- The apple is a main character in many stories.
- Apples symbolize bad luck and danger.
Question 3:
What is one reason Apple Inc. might have chosen it name?

- Apple Inc. wanted to show that computers are dangerous.
- The apple was already a famous symbol.
- It was a coincidence.
- Apples symbolized bad luck and danger.

Question 4:
What does gravity mean in this article?

- a scientific idea that explains how planets move
- a way to cook apples
- a type of computer
- seriousness or somberness

Question 5:
Based on the picture, which sentence is true?

- People make art based on famous myths.
- Gravity was discovered by William Tell.
- William Tell was a real person.
- William Tell was a better scientist than Isaac Newton.
Lesson: The Twist of Nature
Lesson Topic: The Twist of Nature

The Twist of Nature
Good Guys of the Badlands Series
Written by Joy Kita
Illustrated by Sonya O. Lee

Chapter 1: Badlands
I am not very good at being a superhero. I may fight for the good guys, but I struggle with keeping myself in check. It's not easy harnessing so much power. It takes a loose grip with a tight mindset.
They call me Twist. I live in the Badlands. There are no adults here. We are taken at six and left to fend for ourselves. Some of us make it, and some of us don't. I've been one of the lucky ones. For three years, this place has been my home.

The Badlands have never seen an escape. No one knows the way out. The council has made sure of that. No one even knows where we are. What kind of place has no beginning or end?

Most of us don't remember our parents. We wake up in the Badlands and soon grow to forget our former lives. They say there is no way out. Once we turn eighteen, it's over. Whatever it is that keeps us ticking until then stops. It's like our lives are on a timer.

**Chapter 2: Heroes**

Some of us are growing stronger. We have special gifts. Whether given to us by the monsters that put us here or manifested by our own desperation—I don't know. Why do some of us turn and not others?

Not all of the children in the Badlands use their gifts for good. Most of them, faced with the reality of their dismal existence, choose to side with evil.

I have joined with others like me. We are the good guys of the Badlands. The job is not easy. Most of us are only eleven or twelve. Some of us are even younger, but when much is given, much is expected.
Chapter 3: Methane

My room is lit with only a battery operated light in the shape of an old lantern. The battery never dies. My light never fades. It is one more mystery of this place we're in. I live in an abandoned building. I think it must have been used for some kind of research.

There are hospital beds and rusty equipment that scares me. I know there have been generations of children here in the Badlands. Their names and the years they were here are carved everywhere.

I live in this terrifying, haunting place because I'm being hunted. I've made a lot of people angry with me. My superpowers cause a lot of damage. The other good guys and I are trying to stop a violent plot against the current Elect.

"Twist," my friend calls from another room.

I pick my way across the rubble that we haven't bothered to clean up and find him sitting cross-legged, a computer propped on his lap.

Chapter 4: Sidekicks

"I'm tracking Methane now. It looks like he is headed to the school."

I sigh and tap my foot against the cracked concrete floor. "Are you coming with me?" I ask, even though I know he wants me to check it out.

"I'm sending Watts with you," he says with a smile.

My friend's name is Jackhammer. His left arm can stop a moving train, and he wants me to face Methane with Watts?
"So she has electricity flowing through her fingers! It doesn't mean I want her as my sidekick," I say, frowning.

"What makes you think that you are not my sidekick?" Watts asks and taps me on my shoulder.

We tend to disagree, but since we're on the same team we pretend to like each other and head out to stop Methane. There have been attacks on the four schools in the Badlands. No one knows why or who would try and hurt the little ones.

"Stop right there, Methane!" I shout when we round the corner of the schoolhouse and see him at the faded red door.

"Well if it isn't my good friend, Twist. I heard you have a warrant on your head. What did you do, break the law?"

Chapter 5: Poison

I sneer at him and say, "Law in the Badlands is as foul as you smell."

"Take off, Methane. Leave the kids alone," Watts says as she rubs her hands together. Sparks shoot from her fingertips and sizzle into the air.

Methane doesn't hesitate. He opens his mouth. I dive out of the way. Watts is too late. A green cloud of gas covers her face and in seconds, she falls in a heap on the ground.

I hold out my hands. Small funnel clouds shoot up from my palms like miniature tornadoes. Methane tries to bolt away. I thrust out one hand, then the other, karate style, and the tornadoes become massive cyclones that chew up the ground at Methane's feet.

He runs away screaming about revenge, but I've heard it all before. He and the rest of his friends will try harder to stop me next time. I'm really good at making enemies. I help Watts recover, and we check on the little ones. It's just another day of havoc in the Badlands.
Question 1:
How many people have escaped the Badlands?
- two
- one
- five
- no one

Question 2:
What is the moral of "The Twist of Nature"?
- You have to give up when things seem hopeless.
- Only bad people have special powers.
- You have to keep trying even when things seem hopeless.
- All kids are naturally good.

Question 3:
Why does Twist go to the schoolhouse?
- to get an education
- to meet up with old friends
- because he wanted to talk to a teacher
- because schools have been attacked
Question 4:
How is the word desperation used in the following sentence?

*Whether given to us by the monsters that put us here or manifested by our own desperation—I don't know.*

- superpower
- hopelessness
- bad luck
- a mystery

Question 5:
In which chapter is the character Jackhammer introduced?

- Chapter 5
- Chapter 2
- Chapter 3
- Chapter 4

Question 6:
Based on the picture, how is Twist's name related to his superpower?

- He twists his arms to create wind.
- He creates tornadoes, which are also called twisters.
- The bad guys get twisted up in his tornadoes.

Lesson Topic: Neon Rainbow
Neon Rainbow
Written by Eric Hwang

As night falls, the city skyline becomes a neon rainbow. It is like stepping into a movie. The future lives in Shanghai.

Twenty-three million people call Shanghai home, making it the largest city in China and in the world. Although the city has been around for over a hundred years, most of the skyscrapers and dazzling lights were built in the last twenty years.
In any other country, this would be extraordinary. However, this happens all over China. Over a billion people live in China. That's the most people living in one country in the entire world.

Over the last 50 years, China grew rich by creating large factories that make cars, computers, and cellphones that everyone uses. It is the 2nd richest nation, behind only the United States.

While the world marvels at Shanghai and China, the city’s beauty and wealth have cost China a lot. Look at the sky during the day. You see no bright lights; in fact, you don’t see much of anything. A blanket of smoky air, called smog, covers the city.

Smog is a form of pollution. It comes from the soot and smoke made by China’s factories. It's not just ugly—smog kills. In 2010, 1.2 million people died in China because of pollution. Many of those deaths were caused by people breathing smog. Even scarier, pollution has become the number one killer in the world.
Factories and trade have created jobs for millions of poor people. So while many people want an end to pollution, they do not want to return to a poor life. The future Shanghai promises is quickly becoming real all over the world. We have a choice. Will our neon rainbow come from a cloud of smog?

Question 1:
What is **smog**?
- the Chinese word for *factory*
- a smoky layer of pollution
- dirty water on the street
- freezing rain

Question 2:
How many people live in Shanghai?
- six million
- twenty-three billion
- one billion
- twenty-three million

Question 3:
What is the main idea of this article?
- You should not go to Shanghai because the pollution is very dangerous.
- Shanghai is a wonderful city, but it may not be worth the awful pollution.
- Shanghai is an old city with a lot of very old buildings.
- Shanghai is the largest city in China.
Question 4:
What causes the pollution in Shanghai?

- smoke from thousands of chimneys
- the gas from millions of cars
- the smoke and soot from factories
- the thick, wet fog and rain

Question 5:
Look at the picture.
The author included this picture to prove that ________.

- Smog has totally ruined China.
- China is a wealthy nation, but some Chinese people are very poor.
- Every part of China is beautiful.
- Shanghai is a very poor city.

Question 6:
How does the author feel about the smog in Shanghai?

- He feels that the smog is bright and exciting.
- He feels that the smog is dangerous and scary.
- He feels that the smog is annoying.
- He feels that the smog is interesting.
Question 7:

The title of this article is "Neon Rainbow."

Look at the picture. What is the neon rainbow?

- People in Shanghai call pollution the neon rainbow.
- The Neon Rainbow is the name of a park in Shanghai.
- The bright, colorful lights of Shanghai look like a neon rainbow.
- When it rains in Shanghai, a bright rainbow lights up the sky.

Question 8:

Why do you think the author began this article by describing the bright and beautiful lights of Shanghai?

- to help the reader understand how beautiful pollution is
- to show how people in China like pretty things
- to make the reader think the city is ugly
- to show the difference between the beauty of the city and the nastiness of the smog
Question 9:

Read this passage from a different article.

*The pond next to the factory is no longer a nice place. The poisonous chemicals from the factory have leaked into the pond. The animals who live there can't swim in the dirty water, so they need to find a new place to live.*

How is this article similar to "Neon Rainbow"?

- Both articles are about China.
- Both articles include facts about the danger of pollution.
- Both articles were written to convince people to shut down factories.
- Both articles are about electricity.

Lesson Topic: Electric Man

**Electric Man**

Written by Marvin Ferraz
Many comic books have characters who can use the power of electricity. Most often, these superheroes will be able to shoot bolts of electricity from their fingertips. This superpower is cool, of course. Does this superpower have any basis in fact?

The answer lies in a man affectionately known as Electric Man. His real name is Ma Xiangang, but these days it is his “superpower” that defines him.

He learned of his ability on a seemingly ordinary day. His TV broke, and in the process of fixing it, he touched a live wire. Most people would be shocked by doing so. Many would even die, yet Xiangang did not even feel a hint of pain.

Over the next fifteen years, he grew addicted to playing with electricity. His story also baffled scientists. Why did he not seem to feel any pain from electricity?

As with any good mystery, scientists investigated. Much like a superhero, they found that Xiangang’s ability originated in his hands. His skin there was rougher and drier than other people’s hands. In effect, this made them function like a pair of heavy-duty gloves.
With his bare hands alone, he has a resistance to electricity seven to eight times higher than normal people. Aside from the publicity, he has not found much use from his ability.

Still, his story serves as a lesson for all. Superpowers are not exactly real, but there are some pretty cool differences that make us unique!

Question 1:
What caused Xiangang to first touch a live wire?

- He was trying to fix a car.
- His TV broke.
- A thunderstorm shorted his house.
- He was bored.

Question 2:
What is the main idea of “Electric Man”?

- It's safe to touch electrical wires without gloves.
- Ordinary people may have special abilities.
- Superpowers really exist.
- Scientists can create superheroes.

Question 3:
How can Xiangang shock himself without getting hurt?

- No one knows.
- His muscles protect him from electricity.
- His rough hands act like electrical gloves.
- He got used to electricity after many years.
Question 4:
What does live wire mean in this article?
- a wire carrying electricity
- a wire that's alive
- a wire that doesn't need a battery

Question 5:
What might the author think about "superpowers"?
- People can develop superpowers over time.
- People who claim to have superpowers are faking.
- Many people possess superpowers.
- Real abilities only seem like superpowers.

Question 6:
What does this picture tell you about the safety of electricity?
- It is never safe to work with electricity.
- Electrical wires are perfectly safe.
- Electricity is dangerous and should be handled with gloves.
- You must use rope to tie live wires.
Question 7:
Which sentence from the article shows that electrical superpowers are popular?

○ His story also baffled scientists.
○ Most people would be shocked by doing so.
○ Almost every comic book universe has a hero (or villain!) who can harness the power of electricity.
○ As with any good mystery, scientists investigated.

Question 8:
Based on the article, how might Watts from "Twist of Nature" keep safe from her electrical superpower?

○ She carries live wire with her.
○ She brings a battery to catch extra electricity.
○ She uses magic to control electricity.
○ She has rough skin or wears gloves.