Paragraph One

You are walking along a pond when you see a frog – or is it a toad? How can you tell the difference? Frogs and toads have many physical attributes that can be used to identify which is which. Frogs have smooth skin, and rely on their large, powerful legs. Frogs are also, slimmer, smaller, and more streamlined than toads. Toads have warty skin in contrast to frogs. Toads are fatter and slower than frogs. Unlike frogs, toads can puff themselves up with air. Although frogs and toads are different, they also have some similarities. Both frogs and toads are classified as amphibians. They both have lungs, but can breathe through their skin. Using sounds to attract their mates is another similarity between the two. Toads and frogs both have diets that consist of insects, worms and more. As you can see, frogs and toads can easily be mistaken for one another, but when you know what to look for, telling the difference becomes easy.

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Paragraph Two

Have you ever thought about what makes a volcano erupt or what happens afterward? When the temperature rises deep under the Earth’s crust, it becomes hot enough to melt rock and turn it into magma. Sometimes this melted rock blasts through the Earth’s surface, which causes rock, ash, and deadly gases to fly into the air. The lava that flows out of the volcano can knock down trees and destroy houses and even whole towns. Although volcanoes can cause lots of destruction, the volcano’s eruption also creates new land. Many times this new land forms an island in the ocean. You might even live on land created by a volcano!

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Paragraph Three
Astronauts face many difficulties in space caused by weightlessness. One of the challenges is floating around the cabin. To solve this problem, astronauts wear shoes that are coated with a special adhesive. This adhesive sticks to the floor of the cabin. Serving food is another difficulty. It won’t stay on the table! Experts solved this problem by putting food and drinks in pouches and tubes. Food is preprocessed and only needs to be mixed with water. Weightlessness makes the simple task of turning a doorknob or a wrench a real problem. Since there is no gravity to keep the astronaut down, when he exerts a force one way, the opposite force may flip him over completely. Being very careful about how much force one exerts to do these simple tasks usually solves these problems. On earth, life is much simpler, thanks to gravity.

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Paragraph Four
A coconut is a tropical fruit. It comes from Asia originally, but it grows in Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Central America, and South America. A coconut grows on a coconut palm, which looks like a palm but actually is taller and has more leaves. The coconut appears to be shades of brown and has a hairy shell. On the inside, there is a watery liquid called coconut milk. After you break through the shell, you find what is called the coconut meat. Both the meat and the milk are white. Dried coconut meat is called copra. The coconut is a very interesting fruit.

Text Structure:  

Paragraph Five
Fast food gets bad press these days, especially since it often contains too much fat, sodium and calories, but it brings much needed convenience to our stressful busy world. Fast food is easily found and varied. At any mall, for example, customers have many choices at the food court. To avoid too much fat or salt, they can choose healthier options: salads, turkey sandwiches and so on. On a busy Saturday, with two hungry kids, a mother out shopping is happy to find exactly the right food to eat. Not only that, but the food will be ready quickly, thus reducing the stress on her from demanding children. Fast food is also inexpensive; most menu items offer a full meal for under ten dollars. It is easy to see why fast food is so popular these days—it is convenient and reduces our stress.

Text Structure:  
Passage #1 – Chemical and Physical Changes
All matter, all things can be changed in two ways: chemically and physically. Both chemical and physical changes affect the state of matter. Physical changes are those that do not change the make-up or identity of the matter. For example, clay will bend or flatten if squeezed, but it will still be clay. Changing the shape of clay is a physical change, and does not change the matter’s identity. Chemical changes turn the matter into a new kind of matter with different properties. For example, when paper is burnt, it becomes ash and will never be paper again. The difference between them is that physical changes are temporary or only last for a little while, and chemical changes are permanent, which means they last forever. Physical and chemical changes both affect the state of matter.

Passage #2 – The Best PB & J Ever
When I got home from school after a long boring day, I took out the peanut butter, jelly, and bread. After taking the lid off of the jars, I spread the peanut butter on one side of the bread and the jelly on the other, and then I put the two pieces of bread together. After that, I enjoyed it while watching “Cops” on the TV. I swear, that was the best peanut butter and jelly sandwich I ever ate.

Passage #3 – Bobby Fischer
Robert James Fischer was born in Chicago but unlocked the secrets of chess in a Brooklyn apartment right above a candy store. At the age of six he taught himself to play by following the instruction booklet that came with his chess board. After spending much of his childhood in chess clubs, Fischer said that, “One day, I just got good.” That may be a bit of an understatement. At the age of 13 he won the U.S. Junior Chess Championship, becoming the youngest Junior Champion ever. At the age of 14 he won the U.S. Championship and became the youngest U.S. Champion in history. Fischer would go on to become the World Champion of chess, but he would also grow to become his own worst enemy. Instead of defending the title, he forfeited it to the next challenger without even making a move, and the rise of a chess superstar ended with a fizz.

Passage #4 – Save the Tigers
Dr. Miller doesn’t want the tigers to vanish. These majestic beasts are disappearing at an alarming rate. Dr. Miller thinks that we should write to our congress people. If we let them know that we demand the preservation of this species, maybe we can make a difference. Dr. Miller also thinks that we should donate to Save the Tigers. Our donations will help to support and empower those who are fighting the hardest to preserve the tigers. We owe it to our grandchildren to do something.

Passage #5 – The Great Recession
Many people are confused about why our economy went to shambles in 2008. The crisis was actually the result of a combination of many complex factors. First, easy credit conditions allowed people who were high-risk or unworthy of credit to borrow, and even people who had no income were eligible for large loans. Second, banks would bundle these toxic loans and sell them as packages on the financial market. Third, large insurance firms backed these packages, misrepresenting these high-risk loans as safe investments. Fourth, because of the ease of acquiring credit and the rapid growth in the housing market, people were buying two or three houses, intending to sell them for more than they paid. All of these factors created bubbles of speculation. These bubbles burst, sending the whole market into a downward spiral, causing employers to lose capital and lay off employees. Consumer spending then plummeted and most businesses suffered. The economy is like a big boat, and once it gets moving quickly in the wrong direction, it’s hard to turn it around.
Passage #6 – Screen Protector
Before applying the screen protector, clean the surface of your phone’s screen with a soft cloth. Once the surface of your screen is clean, remove the paper backing on the screen protector. Evenly apply the sticky side of the screen protector to your phone’s screen. Smooth out any air bubble trapped on between the protector and the phone screen. Enjoy the added protection.

Passage #7– The Age of the Dinosaurs
Dinosaurs existed about 250 million years ago to 65 million years ago. This era is broken up into three periods known as the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods. The Triassic Period lasted for 35 million years from 250-205 million years ago. Planet Earth was a very different place back then. All the continents were united to form one huge land mass known as Pangaea. The Jurassic Period was the second phase. The continents began shifting apart. The time scale for this famous period is from 205 to 138 million years ago. The Cretaceous Period was the last period of the dinosaurs. It spanned a time from 138 million to about 65 million years ago. In this period the continents fully separated. However, Australia and Antarctica were still united.

Passage #8– Vicious Predators
The Cretaceous Period was filled with dangerous predators, but two of the most feared hunters were the tyrannosaurs rex and the velociraptor. The tyrannosaurs rex was one of the largest carnivores to ever walk the Earth. He was 20 feet tall and weighed seven tons. His jaws could crush down with 3,000 lbs. of force, enough to smash the bones of his prey. The velociraptor was very small compared to rex. Raptors only stood three feet tall and were seven feet long, weighing merely 35 pounds. But the velociraptor was fast. Scientists think that raptors could run 24 miles per hour and turn on a dime. Both dinosaurs used their jaws to kill prey, but the raptor had a secret weapon: a retractable toe claw that he pulled out like a knife to slash at his prey. Both dinosaurs had eyes on the front of their heads, which helped them track prey. If these two dinosaurs had fought, it would be difficult to say which would win; however since raptors died over ten million years before the first tyrannosaurs was born, scientists don’t believe such a fight ever occurred.

Passage #9– Creating a Dinosaur Sculpture
Materials: pipe cleaners, clay, non-toxic paint
Wouldn’t you like a scary dinosaur model on your desk to protect your pencils and textbooks? You can easily make one by following these simple directions. First, bend your to make the frame of your dinosaur. I suggest you create a tyrannosaurus frame by using one long pipe cleaner as his neck, spine, and tail, and then bend another into a u-shape to make his feet. Wrap the feet around the spine piece. Next, roll out clay to wrap around the pipe cleaners. Let the clay dry overnight. The next day you may want to paint your dinosaur using non-toxic paint. His eyes should be white, but feel free to color your dinosaur as you wish. Nobody really knows how dinosaurs were colored, so don’t let anyone tell you that your dinosaur can’t be pink. Lastly, put him on your desk and watch as he or she scares away bullies and pencil thieves.

Passage #10– What Happened to the Dinosaurs?
There are many theories about why the dinosaurs vanished from the planet. One theory that many people believe is that a gigantic meteorite smashed into the Earth. Scientists believe that the meteorite was very big and that the impact may have produced a large dust cloud that covered the Earth for many years. The dust cloud may have caused plants to not receive sunlight and the large plant eaters, or herbivores, may have died off, followed by the large meat eaters, or carnivores. This theory may or may not be true, but it is one explanation as to why these giant reptiles no longer inhabit the Earth.