

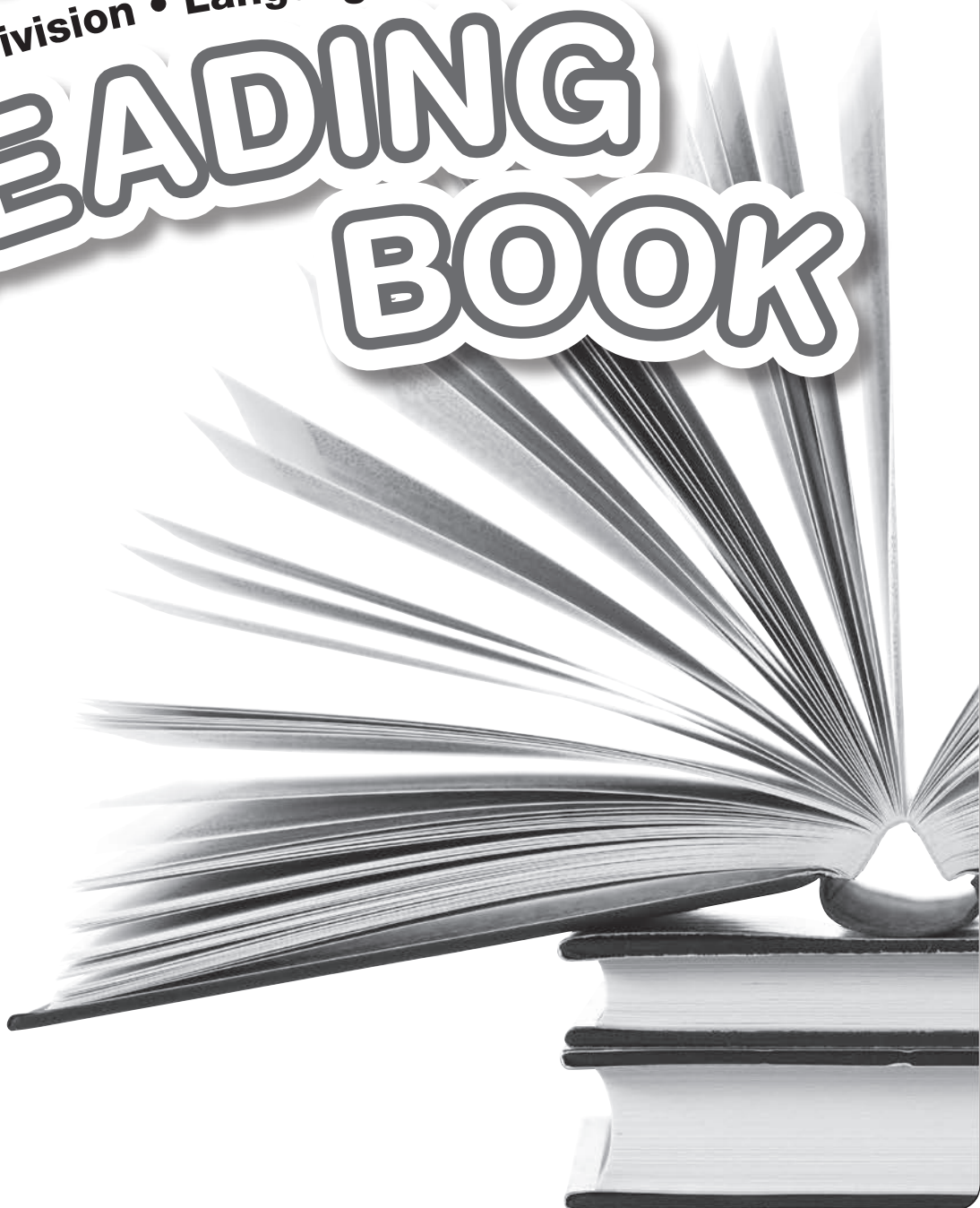
Released Reading Selections, 2017

Grade

6

Junior Division • Language

READING BOOK



Education Quality and
Accountability Office



The Potter and the Washerman



Once there was a potter who made his living creating beautiful pottery from fine porcelain. Not far from the potter lived a washerman who earned his living making dirty laundry as bright and clean as new. 1

The potter and the washerman did well in their trades. However, the potter became jealous because he worried that the washerman was more successful than he was. He decided on a secret plan to ruin him. 2

The potter travelled to the royal palace and was granted an audience with the king. “What do you wish, potter?” asked the king. 3

“I have a simple request, Your Majesty,” replied the potter. “My neighbour, the washerman, is very good at what he does. I would like to help my neighbour improve his business and become more successful.” 4

The king stroked his long beard. “Why should the washerman’s success be of any concern to you?” he asked. 5

The potter cleared his throat nervously and said, “Well, he is my neighbour, so naturally I desire what is best for him.” 6

The king looked intently at the potter. “What did you have in mind, potter?” 7

“A challenge, Your Highness. I propose that my neighbour wash one of Your Majesty’s esteemed elephants until it is spotlessly clean. To complete a challenge like that successfully would increase his business a hundredfold, I am certain.” 8

Having revealed his clever plan, the potter’s heart hammered so loudly he thought all would hear it. He hoped no one would guess the secret part of his plan: that the washerman would fail to complete this impossible challenge, which would cause him to lose business. 9

“I will consider your suggestion,” said the king. 10

A few days later the potter was summoned before the king. 11

“I have just spoken with the washerman,” the king said, “and he was quite surprised by your concern for his well-being. He was also troubled by one difficulty with your idea, but knowing you are an accomplished potter, he thought you would be able to help him.” 12

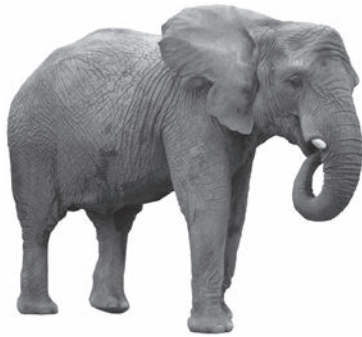
Help the washerman ruin himself? This was better than the potter had anticipated. “I am flattered by the washerman’s request, Your Majesty.” 13

“As you know,” continued the king, “in order to clean the soiled article, the washerman puts it into a large porcelain basin with water and soap. The concern of the washerman was finding a porcelain basin large enough to wash an elephant. But then he remembered your exceptional talents as a potter, and he suggested that you create such a container.” 14

This was terrible. Create a porcelain basin large enough for an elephant? Impossible. And yet, to refuse could destroy his own reputation. With trembling knees, the potter agreed. 15

After many weeks of work, the elephant-sized porcelain bowl was finally ready. On the day of the challenge, the king’s largest elephant was brought to the courtyard. The basin was carefully unloaded from the potter’s wagon and filled with warm water and soap. 16

The washerman stood ready with his best scrub brushes. The elephant was led up the ramp. Trumpeting, it stepped slowly into the delicate basin. 17



Would the basin hold the elephant? 18

It certainly would not! 19

With a crack, the porcelain basin shattered into a thousand pieces, sending a foamy river from the palace courtyard into the town below. 20

Staring at the king, all the people in the courtyard held their breath. 21

The king smiled gently at the potter. “My elephant is waiting to be bathed, and the washerman waits to prove his ability to wash him spotlessly clean. Would you care to go home and create another large basin so the washerman can do this?” 22

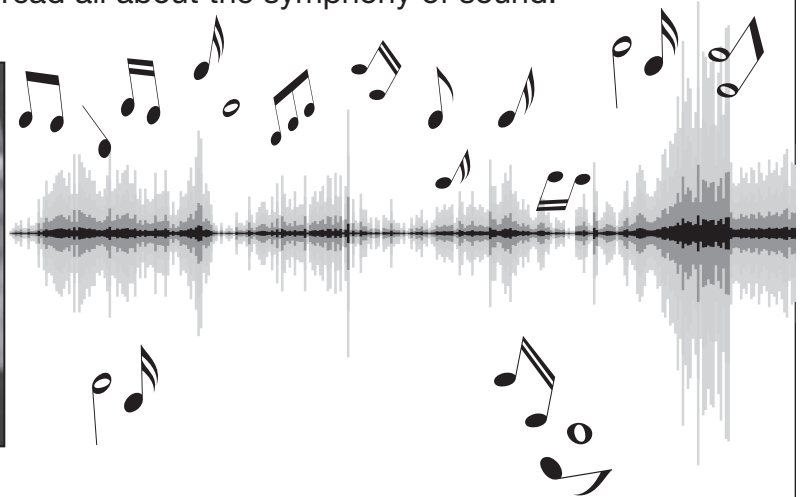
The potter gave great thought to his options, turned and quickly left the palace courtyard. 23

As for the washerman, his wisdom so impressed the king that he became one of the most trusted advisers in the royal court. 24

MAKING WAVES!

The Science Behind Sound

Have you ever wondered how sound reaches your ear? Here's a hint: sound waves. But that's not all there is to it. Different parts of your ear perform amazing feats, too. Tune in and read all about the symphony of sound.



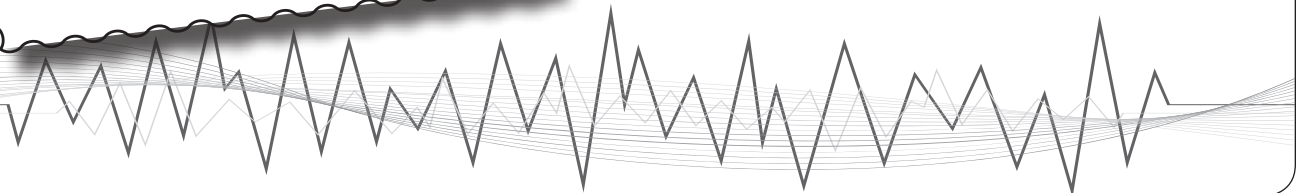
The **pinna**, the external part of the ear, is a sound collector.



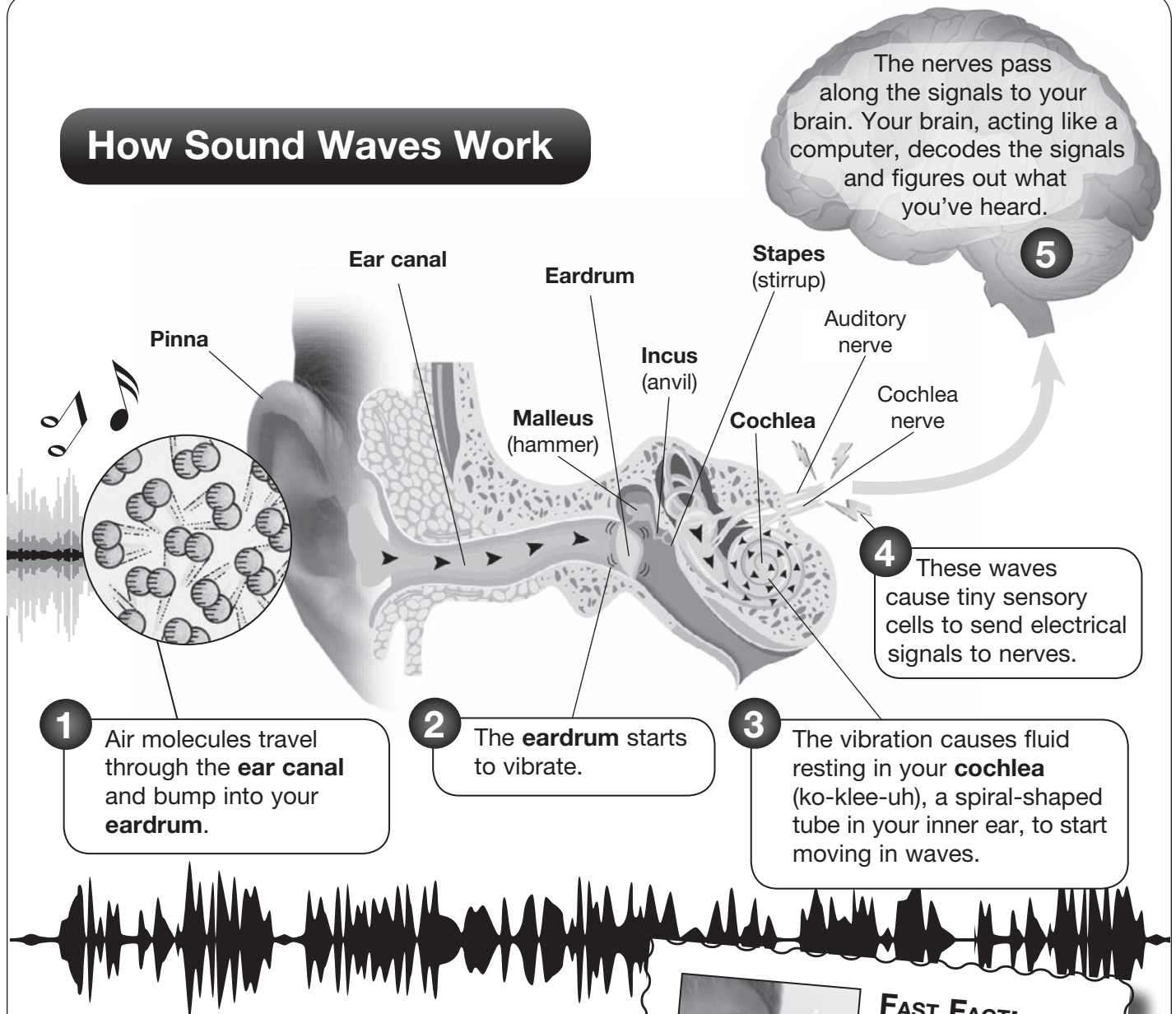
FAST FACT: If you place your hands behind your ears and gently push them out, these two sound collectors take in more air molecules, which causes sounds to seem louder.

Up to Your Ears

A sound is made when something moves or vibrates. This movement causes surrounding air molecules to vibrate as well. The vibrations move outwards and create sound waves. The sound waves travel through the air and eventually reach your ear. Once there, the vibrating molecules continue to travel through your **ear canal**, which ends at your **eardrum**.



How Sound Waves Work



1 Air molecules travel through the **ear canal** and bump into your **eardrum**.

2 The **eardrum** starts to vibrate.

3 The vibration causes fluid resting in your **cochlea** (ko-klee-uh), a spiral-shaped tube in your inner ear, to start moving in waves.

4 These waves cause tiny sensory cells to send electrical signals to nerves.

The nerves pass along the signals to your brain. Your brain, acting like a computer, decodes the signals and figures out what you've heard.

5

Malleus, Incus and Stapes

These three very tiny bones sit between your **eardrum** and **cochlea**. These bones have a special job. They move when your **eardrum** vibrates. This action helps get fluid moving in your **cochlea**.

They are the three smallest bones in your entire body!



FAST FACT: When you have an ear infection, it is hard to hear because fluid builds up between your **eardrum** and **cochlea**, making it hard for the tiny bones to move. Therefore, sound becomes muffled.

GO TO

Language
ANSWERS

D1

Permissions and Credits

Section C1: Reading

Adapted from “The Potter and the Washerman” by Pam Hopper, published in the international edition of *Highlights for Children* magazine, volume 53, no. 6, issue 560, pages 22–23. Copyright © 1998 Highlights for Children, Inc., Columbus, Ohio. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

Section D1: Reading

Adapted from Owl Magazine, “Making Waves, The Science Behind Sound” Owl Magazine, June 2013. Used with permission of Bayard Presse Canada Inc.

**Education Quality and
Accountability Office**



2 Carlton Street, Suite 1200, Toronto ON M5B 2M9
Telephone: 1-888-327-7377 Web site: www.eqao.com

© 2017 Queen's Printer for Ontario