

*Important Concepts . . .*

# Preview Review



*Language Arts*

*Grade 4*

*W3 - Lesson 1: To the Rescue*

## Important Concepts of Grade 4 Language Arts

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## Materials Required

### Textbooks:

1. *Dogs on the Job!*  
*True Stories of Phenomenal Dogs*

Language Arts Grade 4

Version 5

Preview/Review W3 - Lesson 1

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# Preview/Review Concepts for Grade Four Language Arts



***W3 - Lesson 1:  
To the Rescue***

# OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, you should

- recognize and use the past, present, and future tenses of verbs
- make the subject and verb agree, depending on whether the subject is singular or plural

## GLOSSARY

**epilogue** - tells “the rest of the story”; it is the wrap up

**jot notes** - a few notes to remind you of what happened in this section

**predicate** - the “did what” part of the sentence

**verb** - a word that shows action

**strong verb** - an action word that tells the reader exactly what action occurred

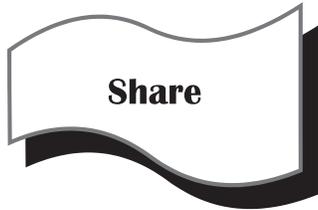
**subject-verb agreement** - the form of the verb changes depending on whether the subject is singular (one) or plural (many)

**past tense** - the author tells about something that happened in the past

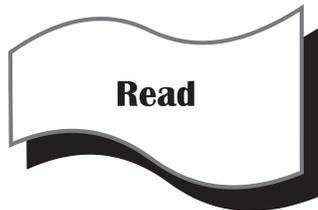
**present tense** - the author tells about something that is happening right now

**future tense** - the author tells about something that will happen in the future

# W3 - Lesson 1: To the Rescue



During W2 - Lesson 5, you wrote a fiction or non-fiction story about a dog. Later, you revised and proofread this story. Share that story now with a partner or small group.



Locate the story, “Balto’s Race Against Death”, in *Dogs on the Job!* With a partner, take turns reading the story, or listen as your teacher reads the story aloud. Read (or listen) to find out about Balto, a dog, and his race to help people dying of a serious disease called diphtheria.



What do you know about **diphtheria**? First of all, look at the word broken into syllables below. Notice the **ph** and **th** letter combinations. Pronounce the **ph** as an **f** sound.

diph-the-ri-a

(pronounced dif-**thir**-ee-uh)



Read the story now.

After reading the story, as a whole group, discuss what you learned about the disease, diphtheria.

Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- How does diphtheria act on the human body?
- Why do few people get this disease today?
- Why was the disease such a threat to the Inuit in 1925?
- What did the medical staff need to fight the disease and save lives in Nome, Alaska?

## How the Story was Written

This story has three parts:

- the background
- the main events
- the story wrap-up

### A. Background to the Story

In the background to the story, there was plenty of serum for diphtheria in Anchorage. Getting it to Nome was the problem. Because of the extreme cold and blizzard conditions, flying was impossible. No highways or trains went to Nome. The train only travelled as far as Nenana, about 1000 kilometers from Nome.

Study the map below. It will give you an idea of the distances talked about in this story.



### B. The Heart of the Story: Balto to the Rescue

Many things happen in the middle section of the story. It begins on page 81 and continues to the bottom of page 84.

This section is really the “heart of the story”. If you wanted to tell someone the story of Balto, you would be wise to have a few notes to remind you of what happened in this section. Notes used for this purpose are called **jot-notes**.

#### First Paragraph

Look at the first paragraph of this section again. It starts with the last paragraph on page 81: “Alaska’s history of using dogsled teams....”

Reread this paragraph. Find the important details and events that are told, and write jot-notes about them. Keep your jot-notes brief (point-form only). Use key words to write your notes.

1. Write your jot-notes for the first paragraph.

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Now, compare your jot-notes to the notes below:

- about 20 pounds (9 kilograms) of serum— wrapped in quilts, canvas, furs
- delivered to Nenana by train
- dogsled teams in relays
- cold and blizzards
- temperature falling below zero

Do you need to add more words to your jot-notes? Do you have enough information to *retell the events* so far?

Now, out loud to yourself or to a partner, try to retell the events in the paragraph looking only at your jot-notes.

How does your story sound so far? Fix your jot-notes if you still need to add a few more words.

### Second Paragraph

Next, read the second paragraph in this section. It begins on page 82: “The dogsled teams plunged through...”

2. Make jot-notes of the important events and details found in the **second** paragraph.

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### Third Paragraph

3. Make jot-notes of the important events and details found in the **third** paragraph.

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Now, using only your jot-notes, try retelling all three paragraphs to a partner.

If you wish, continue writing jot-notes for the next seven paragraphs. You will then have jot-notes to help you retell the entire story of Balto’s amazing adventure.

Can you see how jot-notes can be used to help you in storytelling? Jot-notes are also useful when you are collecting information from books or the Internet for a report.



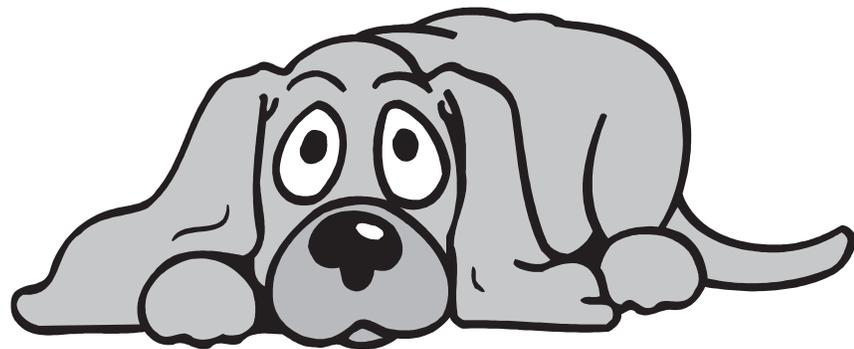
### C. The Rest of the Story

The last section of this story could be called an **epilogue** because it *wraps up* the story of Balto. Often we wonder what happened after the main part of a tale is told. An epilogue tells “the rest of the story”.

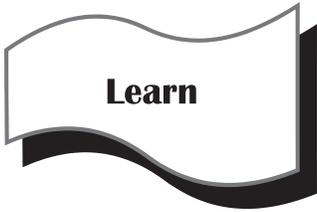
For a short while, Balto and his dog team were famous. A short movie was even made about them. Later, the dogs were put on display at a zoo in the state of Ohio where they lived out their “doggie days”.

Balto, the determined husky, is still remembered today. A statue of him in New York City recognizes his achievements!

An animated film of Balto’s life-saving run was also made in 1995. Perhaps you will get a chance to see this movie one day.



## All About Verbs



### What is a verb?

A **verb** is a word that shows action. It tells what is happening in a sentence. A verb tells what the subject of a sentence is doing, was doing, or will be doing.

Example:

The mouse runs.

The word **runs** tells what the mouse (the subject) is doing.

### What is a predicate?

The verb is part of the **predicate**. The predicate is the “did what” part of the sentence. The verb **runs** is the whole predicate in the sentence, “The mouse runs.”

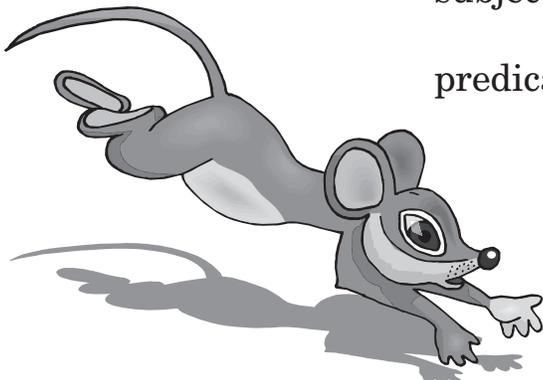
We could make the predicate longer by telling how and where the mouse runs.

The mouse runs quickly back to his hole.

4. Divide this sentence into subject and predicate.

subject \_\_\_\_\_

predicate \_\_\_\_\_





### The Tenses: Past, Present, and Future



In the story about Balto, you learned that the men on the dogsleds struggled to keep awake and concentrate.

The author is telling about something that happened in the past. To do this, he uses the **past tense**.

The men **struggled** to keep awake.

If he wanted to tell about something happening right now, he would use the **present tense**.

The men **struggle** to keep awake.

If the author wanted to tell about something that will happen in the future, he would use the **future tense**.

The men **will struggle** to keep awake.

Here is another sentence about “Balto’s Race Against Death”.

A gust of wind blew the sled and dogs into the air.

6. Write the same sentence using the **present tense**.

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7. Write the sentence using the **future tense**.

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Here is a sentence in the present tense.

Gunnar needs to untangle the dog team’s harness.

- 8. Rewrite the sentence, using the verb in the **past tense**.

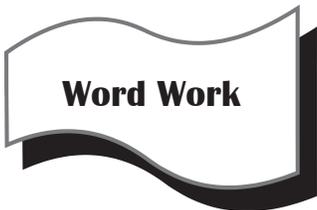
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- 9. Rewrite the sentence, using the **future tense**.

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### Use Strong Verbs

Do you know the difference between a **strong verb** and a **weak verb**?

A strong verb is an action word that tells the reader exactly what action occurred.

Read these two sentences.

- A. The dogsled teams went through the swirling snow and ice.
- B. The dogsled teams plunged through the swirling snow and ice.

10. Which of these sentences helps you imagine the action better?

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Which word would you call a strong verb?

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Which word would you consider a weak verb?

\_\_\_\_\_

For the following sentences, a weak verb is shown in brackets. Replace this weak verb with a strong verb. You may use a dictionary or thesaurus to help you with this activity.

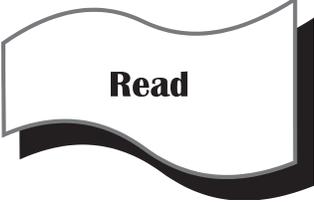
13. The team \_\_\_\_\_ its way through the blizzard. (made)

14. The sheep dog \_\_\_\_\_ up the hill at an amazing speed. (ran)

15. It took no more than a minute for Possy to \_\_\_\_\_ the spot where the package was hidden. (find)



## The Dog Who Leads Two Lives

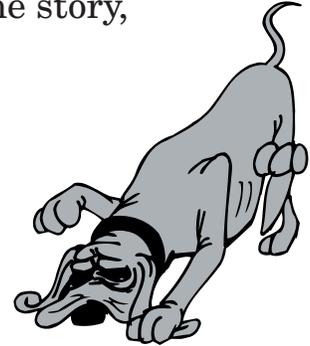


**Read**

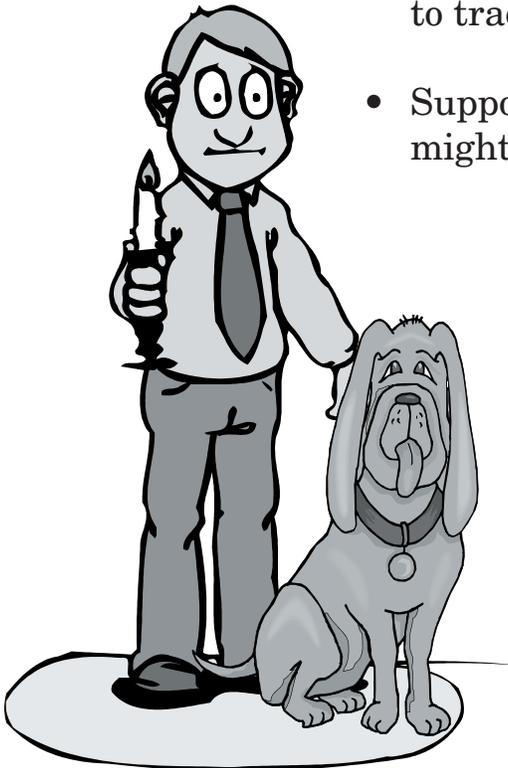
In the book, *Dogs on the Job!*, locate the story, “The Dog Who Leads Two Lives”.

Read the story, and discover what two lives the writer is referring to.

Discuss each question below with a partner or in a small group.



- Describe Madison’s life at St. Joseph’s Catholic School in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Would you be frightened to find a massive, 60-kilogram bloodhound in your school office?
- What did Madison do in his “other life”?
- Discuss examples of Madison’s amazing ability to track.
- Suppose this bloodhound could talk to humans. What might he tell his student friends on Monday morning?



## Wonderful Websites

The addresses for the websites below were accurate at the time of printing.

To find out more about Balto, including pictures, go to

**[www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/sleddogs/balto.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/sleddogs/balto.html)**

For more about Balto and to see a photo of the Balto statue in New York, see

**[www.roadsideamerica.com/pet/balto.html](http://www.roadsideamerica.com/pet/balto.html)**

To learn more about how the dogs were rescued from poor treatment at the “dime-a-look” museum, see

**[www.cmnh.org/fun/balto.html](http://www.cmnh.org/fun/balto.html)**

To see cartoon characters from the 1995 movie of Balto, see

**[www.lionking.org/~kaltag/](http://www.lionking.org/~kaltag/)**

At this site, you can even hear music from the soundtrack if your computer is set up for this.

