



**BEST** FOR  
**ALL**

We will set all students on a path to success.

# Fluency Packet

Skills Strand

**Grade 2**

TN Foundational Skills

## Creative Commons Licensing

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.



### You are free:

**to Share** — to copy, distribute and transmit the work

**to Remix** — to adapt the work

### Under the following conditions:

**Attribution** — You must attribute the work in the following manner:

This work is based on an original work of the Core Knowledge® Foundation made available through licensing under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License. This does not in any way imply that the Core Knowledge Foundation endorses this work.

**Noncommercial** — You may not use this work for commercial purposes.

**Share Alike** — If you alter, transform, or build upon this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under the same or similar license to this one.

### With the understanding that:

For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work. The best way to do this is with a link to this web page:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

A special thank you to the Core Knowledge Foundation, E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Linda Bevilacqua, and David and Meredith Liben. We are beyond grateful for your shared time, expertise, and resources that greatly contributed to the exceptional quality of this TN Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement.

# Table of Contents

# Fluency

# Packet

Introduction

1 Family Letter 2

## Unit 1

1	“Did You Know?” (nonfiction)	3	“Your
2	Sense of Smell” (nonfiction)	4	“Zippytoes”
3	(poetry)	5	“Paw Prints”
4	(fiction)	6	
5	“The Bandit” (Reader’s Theater)	7	

## Unit

6	“What Are Fables?” (nonfiction)	8	“Mr
7	Finney’s Turnip” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (poetry)	9	“Rabbits and
8	Hares” (nonfiction)	10	“Kate, the Author”
9	(Reader’s Theater)	11	
10	“The Blind Men and the Elephant” (fiction)	13	

## Unit

11	“Pop-Corn” by Evaleen Stein (poetry)	14	“Fern
12	Looks at the Stars” (Reader’s Theater)	15	“Twins!”
13	(fiction)	16	
14	“Spelling Bees” (nonfiction)	17	

## Unit

15	“How Many Seconds in a Minute” by Christina Georgina Rossetti (poetry)	18	
16	“What Do You Know About U S Money?” (nonfiction)	19	
17	“All in a Day’s Work” (Reader’s Theater)	20	

## Unit 5

18	“Foreign Lands” by Robert Louis Stevenson (poetry)	22	19
	“Castles in the Middle Ages” (nonfiction)	23	20
	“Jousting” (nonfiction)	24	
21	“An Outing” (fiction)	25	
22	“A Knight in Training” (Reader’s Theater)	26	

## Unit 6

23	“The Star-Spangled Banner” by Francis Scott Key (poetry)	28 24
	“Protecting the Star-Spangled Banner” (nonfiction)	29 25
	“The Flag at Fort Henry” (nonfiction)	30 26
	“Preserving the Star-Spangled Banner” (Reader’s Theater)	31 27
	“Beauty and the Beast” (fiction)	33

# Fluency Packet

---

This fluency packet was created to accompany TN Foundational Skills Grade 2 materials. It consists of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction, as well as Reader's Theater selections. These additional text selections provide opportunities for students to practice reading with fluency and expression (prosody). The selections are grouped by unit to relate to the topics of each Grade 2 Skills unit reader. The selections within a given unit can be used in any order, though they are arranged in this packet according to word count, starting with the shortest selections. At the beginning of the week, the teacher should make sufficient copies of the week's selection for each student. The teacher should take time to model reading the selection aloud to all students. Then, students take the selection home to practice reading aloud throughout the week. The expectation for all students should be that they are prepared to read the selection fluently and with prosody by Friday. At the end of the week, the teacher should select a few students to individually read the selection aloud. Teachers may also wish to have a few students choral read the selection. Be sure to provide opportunities for different students to read aloud each week.

Teachers may want to ask students to volunteer to read individually, rather than require students who are unprepared and/or who have reading difficulties to read aloud before the class and risk being embarrassed. It will be important, however, to ensure that these students have other opportunities to read aloud at another time and/or in other appropriate contexts.

You will want to establish audience guidelines for all students. These are some ideas but you will want to make guidelines that work for your students:

- Listen respectfully to your classmates.
- Listen without talking.
- Ask students to give their classmate(s) a round of applause and sincere compliments on their reading. Model compliments by saying, "I liked it when..."



**Dear Family Member,**

Throughout Grade 2, your child will be bringing home short text selections on a weekly basis to practice reading. Your child should read the selection aloud each night to help him/her become increasingly fluent and able to read without hesitation. We encourage you or another family member to read the selection aloud first to model reading with fluency and expression.

At the end of each week, your child may be called upon to practice reading the selection aloud in class.

Repeated readings of text help build reading fluency, which includes automatic word recognition, expression, accuracy, and speed. The goal of using these short text selections is to help your child continue to strengthen his/her reading skills.



## 1. **“Did You Know?”**

---

Big cats, little cats, lions or kittens, they are a lot alike! Cats are expert hunters! They are able to leap, run, crouch, or stay perfectly still. Cats will stalk and then spring on their prey. Sharp claws and sharp teeth help them, too. Cats also see very well at night and they have keen hearing which helps them when they hunt. Cats make wonderful pets, too. You will see them use some of their hunting skills when they play with you!

Word Count: 82 words



## 2. **Your Sense of Smell**

Sniff! Sniff! Your sense of smell tells your brain many different things! When you smell something, your brain lets you know if you smell something sweet, like candy, or stinky like a skunk. Did you know that your sense of smell helps you taste your food? It does! While your sense of taste tells you if your food is sweet, sour, bitter or salty, your sense of smell is very busy, too. It adds to the flavor in your mouth by helping you smell food at the same time you taste it!

Word Count: 92 words





### 3 “Zippytoes”

---

Whish! Whiz! A flash of fur just zipped by!

Was it a red fox, speedy and sly?

A rabbit, hip-hopping to and fro?

A bobcat or lion? Friend or foe?

Click, zip, pop! Click, zip, thwack! Click, swish, smack!

Maybe a panther, hunting a snack?

It made so much noise while on the chase,

And now it is gone, without a trace!

Whish! Whiz! A flash of fur just zipped past!

It was big and soft, and so, so fast...

Oh, that was easy! It was a snap!

Just my cat chasing a bottle cap!

Word Count: 95 words



#### 4. **“Paw Prints”**

Jens asked for a pet for his birthday but there was no pet when his big day came. His sister gave him a box tied with a ribbon. Jens opened the box and found a note. It said, “I will take you to the animal shelter to select a pet. Happy Birthday!”

They drove to the shelter. Jens looked at all of the cats and kittens and held two of them. As he put the tan and white cat back in its bed, Jens saw paw prints on his shirt. “This is the pet for me!” he said.

Word Count: 98 words



## 5 “The Bandit”

---

**Three characters: Grandpa, Granny, and Tim**

**Tim:** Quick! Quick! A bandit has been in the hen house!

**Grandpa:** Where? When? Why? Which hen house? What did the bandit take? How do you know?

*(Clucking noises made by all readers)*

Let me take a close look. Bad news. Three chickens are gone and all of the eggs are gone! We’ve been robbed.

**Tim:** Could it be a fox bandit? Could it be an owl bandit?

**Granny:** What’s going on out here? You two are making more noise than the chickens.

**Tim:** Oh, Granny! Three chickens are gone and all of the eggs are gone!

**Granny:** Well, well, well. I think I got up before you did! So I know the answer!

**Tim:** Please tell us, we are very curious!

**Granny:** I gathered all of the eggs and gave three chickens to my brother this morning.

*(Everyone laughs)*

**Granny:** Just call me The Granny Bandit!

*(Everyone smiles and laughs)*

Word Count: 123 words



## 6 **“What Are Fables?”**

---

The fables lots of people know were said to be told by a man named Aesop (“ee-sop”). He lived in Greece long, long ago. Aesop wanted people to treat each other nicely. He knew that people do not like to be told when they are not nice. So, he wrote many of his stories about animals. His animal characters did all of the things people do that can make trouble! They told fibs and cheated, and they were lazy. At the end of each story, Aesop gave a moral, or lesson, for the story so people might think of ways to be nicer.

Word Count: 105 words



## 7 **“Mr. Finney’s Turnip”**

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Mr. Finney had a turnip  
And it grew, and it grew,  
And it grew behind the barn,  
And the turnip did no harm.

And it grew, and it grew,  
Till it could grow no taller;  
Then Mr. Finney took it up  
And put it in the cellar.

There it lay, there it lay,  
Till it began to rot;  
When his daughter Susie washed it  
And put it in the pot.

Then she boiled it and boiled it,  
As long as she was able;  
Then his daughter Susie took it  
And put it on the table.

Mr. Finney and his wife  
Both sat down to sup;  
And they ate, and they ate,  
Until they ate the turnip up.

Word Count: 117 words



## 8 “Rabbits and Hares”

You may have heard the story about the tortoise and the hare. Your first question may have been, “What is a hare?” Well, a hare is like a rabbit and it is not like a rabbit!

Let’s compare.

Hares are bigger, faster, and stronger than rabbits. They have longer ears, feet, and legs. When a hare feels that danger is near, it will run a long, long way to escape. Hares like to live alone in an underground burrow.

Rabbits are a bit smaller from head to toe than hares. When a rabbit feels that danger is near it will quickly hop to a hiding place. Rabbits like to live together in nests above ground.

Rabbits and hares do look very much alike. But they are different, too!

Word Count: 128 words



## 9 “Kate, the Author!”

---

### Two characters: Nan and Gran

*Eight year old Kate and her grandmother Nan are leaving a book store, after just having met an author. They are walking to the car.*

**Kate:** Nan, I’d like to write a book!

**Nan:** That is a fantastic idea! I will help you, if you need help. May I do the art for your book?

**Kate:** Oh, yes! Thank you.

*Kate and Nan arrive at home. Kate gets her writing supplies and sits down at the table. She has been working for 20 minutes.*

**Nan:** How is your book coming along?

**Kate:** I wrote down all of the cool things I did at your house this summer. Once I got started, it went fast!

**Nan:** Sometimes when you write, you have to write things two or three times to get the best words and the best word order.

**Kate:** Yes, at school it is called Plan-Draft-Edit-Write. It is a big help!

**Nan:** What sort of book are you writing?

**Kate:** This is a book about my adventures out west while I was visiting you!

**Nan:** I am very happy that you want to tell other children about your summer with me here in the West.

*Three weeks later, back at her own home, Kate's dad takes her to the printer's office.*

**Printer:** This book is very well written. Children out there will like this book!

**Kate:** Thank you.

**Printer:** I would like to print your book, if that is alright with you.

**Kate:** YIPPEE!!

Word Count: 165 words





## 10 **“The Blind Men and the Elephant”**

Once there were six blind men who wanted to know what an elephant was.

The first blind man stretched his hands and felt the elephant’s side. “I can feel it,” the man said. “The elephant is like a big sturdy wall.”

The second man was standing near the elephant’s head. He put his hand on the long, sharp tusk. “A wall?” he said. “No, the elephant is not like a wall, it’s like a spear.”

The third man reached around the elephant’s leg with both arms. He said, “I am sure both of you are wrong. The elephant is more like a tree.”

The fourth man reached up and touched the elephant’s ear. “All of you are wrong! An elephant is like a fan,” he said.

Now, the fifth man was standing by himself at the elephant’s other end. He happened to grab the animal’s tail. “Really, I don’t know where you people get these ideas,” he said. “I can tell you an elephant is like a rope.”

The elephant tickled the sixth man with his trunk. Then he said with a shudder, “All of you are wrong. It is clear to me that the elephant is a very large snake.”

“Nonsense!” said the others as they quietly began to leave.

The men never bothered to put their heads together to understand what the elephant was really like.

Word Count: 228 words



## 11. “Pop-Corn”

by Evaleen Stein

Pop! Pop!—Poppetty-pop!  
Shake and rattle and rattle and shake  
The golden grains as they bounce and break  
To fluffy puffiness—Poppetty-pop!  
Bursting and banging the popper’s stop!

Poppetty-pop!

Pop! Pop!

The yellow kernels, oh, see them grow  
White as cotton or flakes of snow!

Pop! Pop!

O-ho, how they frolic and fly about  
And turn themselves suddenly inside  
out! Pop-pop-poppetty! Pop-pop-pop!  
The popper’s full and we’ll have to stop;  
Pile the bowl with the tempting treat,  
Children, come, it is time to eat!

Word Count: 84 words



## 12 “Fern Looks at the Stars”

**Two characters: Fern and Dad**

**Fern:** Dad, Dad! The stars are beginning to shine!

**Dad:** Grab your sweater. I’ll get the folding lawn chairs.

*(Dad and Fern go to the backyard, set up the chairs, and gaze at the sky.)*

**Dad:** Do you see how round the moon looks tonight?

**Fern:** The stars are sparkling!

**Dad:** Stars are made of gas and fire. Our sun is a star, made of gas and fire, too. The stars are far, far away...past the houses, trees, and clouds.

**Fern:** My teacher says groups of stars look like shapes of things and they have special names.

**Dad:** That’s right. This group looks like a dog. *(He points to a group of stars.)* That set looks like a dipper or cup. *(He points to another group of stars.)* There is the North Star!! *(He points to the North Star.)*

*(It is late. Fern and her dad fold the chairs and walk to the house.)*

**Fern:** Thank you for sharing the stars with me. Dad, I want to be a scientist and study the stars when I grow up!

Word Count: 113 words



### 13 “Twins!”

---

Brittany and Brianna Winner are identical twins. Brittany started selling her artwork to local stores when she was six years old! At age seven, Brianna sang in front of many audiences. One audience was over 30,000 people! Then, at the end of fourth grade, they decided to write a book together. It took nine months to finish the story. Can you guess what happened? Their first book won many awards, it was a *best seller!* The twins wrote more books and today over 65,000 schools use Brittany’s and Brianna’s books. Their books are sold at book stores all over America. The first book they wrote will be made into a movie.

Brittany and Brianna are great examples of children excelling!

Word Count: 120 words



## 14 “Spelling Bees”

---

Spelling Bees have been held for about 200 years. Some experts believe spelling bees started in America! These contests were started to give students a way to practice their spelling words. People who write about history think that the contests may have first been called a spelling match. The word match is used here as you would use it to name a contest like a tennis or golf match. Historians are not sure how use of the word *bee* came about. There are some good guesses, but no one seems one hundred percent certain. Today, the most famous spelling bee is the National Spelling Bee held every May. This contest is so popular it can be seen on television.

Start practicing!

Word Count: 121 words



## 15 “How Many Seconds In A Minute?”

by Christina Georgina Rossetti

How many seconds in a minute?

Sixty, and no more in it.

How many minutes in an hour?

Sixty for sun and shower.

How many hours in a day?

Twenty-four for work and play.

How many days in a week?

Seven both to hear and speak.

How many weeks in a month?

Four, as the swift moon runneth.

How many months in a year?

Twelve the almanack makes clear.

How many years in an age?

One hundred says the sage.

How many ages in time?

No one knows the rhyme.

Word Count: 90



## 16 **“What Do You Know About U.S. Money?”**

The money we use in the United States is a mix of paper money called notes and metal discs called coins. These are made in printing places called United States Mints. Paper money is not really made of paper! It is made of two kinds of cloth combined; linen and cotton. Coins are made of different metals. For example, the penny is made of copper and zinc. The dime is made of copper and a metal called nickel. If you have the chance, visit a United States Mint. You can visit in person or online.

Working at a U.S. Mint would be fun! You might be an artist, a counter, or maybe a member of the Mint Police Force! There are many jobs to choose from at a mint.

Word Count: 129 words



## 17 “All in a Day’s Work”

**Two characters: Kurt and Kim, brother and sister**

**Kim:** Come on, Kurt! Let’s go. I’ll be late for work if you don’t hurry.

**Kurt:** But Kim, I need to finish my breakfast.

**Kim:** Kurt, you eat more than any person I know.

**Kurt:** Ok, Kim, I will bring my toast with me. Are you going to drop me off at the YMCA?

**Kim:** Yes, Kurt, I will leave you there and then come back and get you when my shift is over.

**Kurt:** How long is your shift today, Kim?

**Kim:** Today I work a four-hour shift.

**Kurt:** Kim, do you like your job?

**Kim:** Yes, Kurt, I like my job. It’s not my dream job but the people I work with are nice. I also really like some of the customers.

**Kurt:** Who is your favorite customer?

**Kim:** I think my favorite customer is Mr. Jim. He comes in every day for a newspaper and a can of cat food.

**Kurt:** Why doesn’t he just get a bunch of cat food at once?

**Kim:** Well, I think that’s because he has to walk up three flights of steps to get to his apartment.

**Kurt:** Yes, a lot of cans of cat food would be heavy.



**Kim:** Hey, maybe you can come with me to work one day and volunteer to carry packages for the customers. Would you like to do that?

**Kurt:** Oh, I don't know Kim. That sounds pretty hard.

**Kim:** It wouldn't be hard, it would be fun.

**Kurt:** How would carrying a lot of heavy bags be fun?

**Kim:** You would get to meet lots of new people.

**Kurt:** Kim, if it is okay with you, I think I will just stick with the friends I have.

**Kim:** Okay, Kurt, have it your way!

**Kurt:** Thanks for understanding, Kim.

**Kim:** You bet, Kurt!

Word Count: 277 Words



## 18 “Foreign Lands”

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Up into the cherry tree  
Who should climb but little me?  
I held the trunk with both my hands  
And looked abroad in foreign lands.

I saw the next door garden lie,  
Adorned with flowers, before my eye,  
And many pleasant places more  
That I had never seen before.

I saw the dimpling river pass  
And be the sky’s blue looking-glass;  
The dusty roads go up and down  
With people tramping in to town.

If I could find a higher tree  
Farther and farther I should see,  
To where the grown-up river slips  
Into the sea among the ships,

To where the roads on either hand  
Lead onward into fairy land,  
Where all the children dine at five,  
And all the playthings come alive.

Word Count: 124 words



## 19. **“Castles in the Middle Ages”**

Did you ever wonder where kings, queens, and knights of long ago lived? Most of them lived in castles which were forts!

A castle was made to protect people from enemies. The walls were very high. Most castles also had watch towers. These towers were taller than the walls so knights could see far across the land.

Many castles also had a moat. The moat was a very wide, deep ditch filled with water. The entrance into the castle was often a drawbridge over the moat. It could be moved up to become a door that could seal off the entrance to the castle.

These three parts of the castle helped protect the knights, the king and queen, and the people who lived near the castle. If an enemy was near, people from the villages came inside to be safe. This helped everyone inside stay safe and kept the enemies outside!

Word Count: 151 words



## 20 “Jousting”

---

Long ago, when kings and queens lived in castles, they were protected by knights. Knights would defend the land, the castle, and the people from enemies.

In order to stay strong and keep their skills sharp, knights would drill with spears, shields, and lances. The people of the land liked to come and watch these drills. These practices became big events in the same way people enjoy going to a baseball game today.

Over time, practices became huge tournaments. Jousting was the most popular event. Crowds of onlookers cheered for their favorite knight as he charged toward another knight, both riding fast horses. Each man held a lance tight in his hand pointing it straight ahead. The knight that knocked the other knight off of his horse was the winner!

These events were games and contests, but they were also excellent practice in case the knights had to fight a war with knights from another land.

Word Count: 156 words



## 21 “An Outing”

---

King William and his son, Edward, went out on a journey one fine morning riding their favorite horses. They were accompanied by Sir Arthur and the wizard Merlin. The four made their way across the castle drawbridge, through the meadow and up the hill to the green forest. As they rode through the dense trees of the forest, they talked about the happenings of the kingdom. All of the men were looking forward to the upcoming jousting tournament. Many knights from other kingdoms had begun to arrive at King William’s castle. The knights spent their time practicing their jousting in the courtyard of the castle. When they weren’t practicing, the knights repaired their armor or groomed their horses. Often the knights rode their horses out into the countryside to give the animals a chance to exercise.

As King William’s foursome rounded a turn in the forest path, they met just such a group of knights. Greeting each other jovially, the knights joined the King’s group and they made their way back to the castle.

Word Count: 174 words



## 22. "A Knight in Training"

**Two Characters:** Arthur, a young boy about 8 or 9, and Merlin, an old wizened wizard

**Setting:** A sunny summer day in a meadow in the shadow of a hill with a cave

**Arthur:** Merlin, we have been training together for almost a month. I still don't know much about you.

**Merlin:** Hmmm, let's see, you know the King wants me to train you to be a knight. You also know I am here to protect you during the day. What else do you need to know?

**Arthur:** Where do you live? Do you live in the castle?

**Merlin:** No, I live in the cave you see up on the hill above this meadow.

**Arthur:** A cave? Isn't it wet?

**Merlin:** Wherever did you get that notion? Not all caves are wet. In fact, mine is quite dry and comfortable. Would you like to see it?

**Arthur:** Sure, can we ride our horses to it or do we have to walk?

**Merlin:** I have a better idea, let's race. 1-2-3-go!

**Both riders race across the meadow and up the hill.**

**Arthur:** Merlin, you win! Your horse knew the way.

**Merlin:** I think it is a tie. Let the horses graze while we visit.

**Arthur: (approaching the cave opening)** Merlin, this is much different than I imagined! Look, you have little seats made out of logs. I see the fire with the pan where you must do your cooking. You even have mugs here for tea.

**Merlin:** Speaking of tea, would you like some?

**Arthur:** Yes, that would be nice. Merlin, may I ask something?

**Merlin:** Yes, Arthur, you may ask me anything but that doesn't mean I will answer!

**Arthur:** The other pages at the castle say you are a wizard. Is that true?

**Merlin:** Do YOU think it is true?

**Arthur:** I'm not sure. They tell me lots of things that I find out later aren't true.

**Merlin:** Ah, the truth always reveals itself with time. While we wait, let's get back to work. Your sword skills need some more practice!

Word Count: 277 words



## 23 **"The Star-Spangled Banner"**

by Francis Scott Key

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous  
fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?  
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,  
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave,  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

Word Count: 80 words





## 24. **“Protecting the Star Spangled Banner”**

Air, light, and water are very good for plants. But when those things are on or near a piece of cloth that is 200 years old, it can be very bad! The flag that Francis Scott Key wrote about at Fort McHenry is safe today. At the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C., that very flag is on display for all to see.

Air, light, and water won't damage it because the flag is kept in a special chamber. The chamber is water proof, fire proof, and the lights are kept very low in order to keep the flag from rotting, burning, or fading. Only trained workers wearing gloves are allowed to touch it. Many scientists worked together to conserve, or protect, this very, very special flag.

Word Count: 128 words



## 25 **“The Flag at Fort McHenry”**

In 1813, a lady named Mary Pickersgill was hired to make two flags for Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Maryland. One of those flags became very famous! Mary made the flag that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the Star-Spangled Banner.

The flag was stitched by hand using a needle and thread. Mary was asked to make a huge flag 30 x 42 feet in size. (It would be fun to measure the size of that flag!) The flag was so big it did not fit in Mary’s house. She used a large building across the street from her house to work on the flag.

Mary had some help with the sewing. Her daughter, two nieces, and an indentured servant worked side by side with Mary. It took the women about seven weeks to make the two flags. Little did they know one of those flags would become very famous!

Word Count: 150 words



## 26 “Preserving the Star-Spangled Banner”

**Two girls: Alyssa and Gretchen**

**Alyssa:** Hey Gretchen, take a look at this!

**Gretchen:** What is it now, Alyssa? I am trying to read.

**Alyssa:** Look at this program on TV. It’s all about how the folks at the Smithsonian are trying to preserve the flag that flew over Fort McHenry.

**Gretchen:** What’s so special about that flag?

**Alyssa:** It is the flag that was flying when Francis Scott Key wrote our national anthem.

**Gretchen:** I still don’t get it; what’s so special about that flag and Francis Scott Key?

**Alyssa:** In the War of 1812, there was a battle in the harbor at Fort McHenry.

**Gretchen:** OK, so?

**Alyssa:** Francis Scott Key was a passenger on a boat and saw the battle from the deck.

**Gretchen:** How come he didn’t get shot?

**Alyssa:** Well, I guess he was far enough away that he could see but still be safe.

**Gretchen:** So why did he write a song about it?

**Alyssa:** It didn’t start out as a song. He wrote a poem about trying to see if the Americans won the battle by watching throughout the night to see if the flag was still on the flagpole.

**Gretchen:** Was it?

**Alyssa:** Of course it was!

**Gretchen:** So that's when he wrote our national anthem?

**Alyssa:** Yes, but it didn't become our national anthem until much later.

**Gretchen:** It's pretty hard to sing.

**Alyssa:** Yes, it is but we should all try to learn the words and sing it in a respectful way.

**Gretchen:** Will you teach me the words?

**Alyssa:** I thought you didn't want me to bother you?

**Gretchen:** I changed my mind!

Word Count: 247 words



## 27. **“Beauty and the Beast”**

Once upon a time, there was a merchant who lived with his three daughters. He loved all three of his daughters. But there was a special place in his heart for the youngest, Beauty.

One day a letter came. The letter said that one of the merchant’s ships had landed and was full of fine things. The man packed to make the trip to claim his goods. Before he left, he asked his girls what he might bring them as a gift.

The two older girls asked for fancy clothing.

But Beauty said, “Dear father, just bring me a rose.”

On his way home, a snow storm blew in. He came upon a large house. The front door was unlocked, so he went into the house. There was a warm fire in the fireplace. Next to the fireplace was a table with a tasty meal perfect for one person. He sat down and ate the food.

After eating, the merchant explored the house. He found a lush garden with a lovely rosebush. He plucked a single rose. Just as the stem broke, he heard a loud roar behind him. The startled merchant turned and saw a terrible monster.

“How dare you!” snarled the Beast, grabbing the rose.

The merchant was scared. “I only wanted a rose for one of my daughters.”

“I will have mercy on you,” said the Beast, “on one condition. One of your daughters must come live with me.” The sad father returned home and told his daughters what had happened.

Beauty did not hesitate. “I will go,” she said quietly.

Beauty and her father returned to the palace. The Beast filled a trunk with gold and sent Beauty's father away. As Beauty watched her father ride away, she tried to be brave.

"Beauty," said the Beast, "do not be afraid. Take this advice: Trust your heart, not your eyes."

At first the Beast's looks scared Beauty, but soon his kindness caused her to lose her fear. She became fond of him. The Beast would talk to her during dinner and make her laugh. After each meal, the Beast always asked, "Beauty, will you marry me?" Every time, Beauty answered "no."

One night, the Beast saw a sad look on Beauty's face. She told him that she missed her family, and she longed to see her father.

"Dear Beast," said Beauty, "I long to see my father. Please let me go for four weeks. Then I will come back and stay with you forever."

"Very well," sighed the Beast. "Take this magic ring. When you want to come back, turn the ring round upon your finger and say, 'I wish to go back to my Beast.'"

When Beauty awoke early the next morning, she found herself in her father's home. Day after day, Beauty enjoyed being with her father.

When the time came for her to return to the Beast, every day she told herself, "Today I will go back." But every night she put it off again.

One night, she had a dream. She dreamed she was wandering in the garden; she saw the Beast lying on the ground. “Oh, he is dead!” she cried. “He is dead, and it is my fault!” She took him in her arms. The Beast slowly opened his eyes.

Beauty cried, “Oh, Beast, I never knew how much I loved you until now.”

In a faint voice, the Beast said, “Beauty, I was dying because you had forgotten your promise. Can you really love such an ugly monster as me?” Then, once again, the Beast asked, “Beauty, will you marry me?”

She replied, “Yes, dear Beast! I will!”

As she spoke, a blaze of light flashed around her. Beauty covered her eyes. When she opened them again, she saw a handsome prince.

“I was the Beast,” said the prince. “I was cursed to live as a monster until someone could see past my looks to the real me.”

The next day, with Beauty’s father looking on, they got married. And they lived happily ever after.

Word Count: 675 words

