

# ACTION

**Teaching and reinforcing essential reading and writing skills for middle and high school students reading at the 3rd- to 5th-grade level**

| ISSUE DATES | 9/7 | 9/21 | 10/5 | 10/26 | 11/9-23 | 12/7 | 1/11 | 2/1 | 2/22 | 3/15 | 4/5 | 4/19 | 5/10 |
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## New Action Web Site!

Dear Teacher,

Welcome back to school! I have exciting news for you. Starting this fall, *Scholastic Action* is offering more resources for you than ever before.

We've just relaunched our *Action* Web site, [www.scholastic.com/actionmag](http://www.scholastic.com/actionmag). As you receive each issue this year, check the site for valuable extras, including:

- five bonus printable skills activity sheets tied to each issue, available only online!
- multimedia Web links to support articles found in the Student Edition.
- an index of *Action* articles by skill covered, so that you can easily find the article you need when teaching a particular skill.
- fun writing contests to motivate your students.
- information about available grants and other key funding opportunities.

In *Action's* Student Edition, you can look forward to inspirational true teen stories, our ever-popular Readers Theater plays (now with a full-page activity), an expanded section for current news, an improved back-page vocabulary puzzle, and more. Please feel free to contact us with comments, ideas, or requests.

Check out our updated Web site  
[www.scholastic.com/actionmag](http://www.scholastic.com/actionmag)

Sincerely,  
Sarah Jane Brian  
Editor, *Scholastic Action*  
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### ISSUE-AT-A-GLANCE: reading levels, skills, and standards

| Page | Article  | Skill taught and reinforced   | NCTE & IRA Standards, p. T4 |
|------|--|---|-----------------------------|
| 4    | <b>Will Smith</b> , profile<br>READING LEVEL Lexile: 670/Dale-Chall Grade 3.5                    | <b>Vocabulary:</b> understanding contractions                       | 1, 5, 6, 11, 12             |
| 6    | <b>Jesse Owens</b> , Readers Theater play<br>READING LEVEL Dale-Chall Grade 4                    | <b>Fluency/Reading Comprehension:</b> chunking/problem and solution | 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 12          |
| 12   | <b>Speaking From the Heart</b> , true teen story<br>READING LEVEL Lexile: 570/Dale-Chall Grade 3 | <b>Reading Comprehension:</b> practicing assessment                 | 1, 3, 6, 11, 12             |
| 16   | <b>Tracking Jaguars</b> , science<br>READING LEVEL Lexile: 830/Dale-Chall Grade 4                | <b>Reading Comp With a Map, Chart, or Graph:</b> reading a map      | 1, 3, 5, 6, 11, 12          |
| 20   | <b>No-School Fridays</b> , debate<br>READING LEVEL Lexile: 660/Dale-Chall Grade 3.5              | <b>Writing:</b> distinguishing fact from opinion                    | 1, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12          |
| 22   | <b>Be a Health Hero!</b> real-life reading and writing   | <b>Practical Literacy:</b> reading nutrition information            | 1, 6, 11, 12                |
| 24   | <b>Quest Crew</b> , puzzle   | <b>Vocabulary:</b> using vocabulary words in context                | 1, 6, 11                    |

**VOCABULARY IN ACTION**  
*Understanding Contractions***MEETING STATE STANDARDS:**

Students will understand the constructions and meanings of contractions. This is similar to California's standard "Identify and correctly use contractions."

**About the Story:** This superstar says hard work has been the key to his success.

**Pre-Reading Skill Builder**

- **Starter shout-out: Who is Will Smith?** Allow students a few minutes to "shout out" what they know about this TV, film, and music star. Write the information on the board. Later, students can see which information in the story they already knew and which facts they learned.
- **Contraction action:** What does the apostrophe do in a contraction? (*It takes the place of a missing letter or letters.*) Write some familiar contractions (such as *I'm, it's, we're, he'll hasn't, and don't*) on the board. Use each one in a sentence, and ask students to identify the two words that comprise it.

**Post-Reading Skill Builder**

- **An anecdote** is a short, interesting story that helps make a point. Ask students, "What happened in the anecdote about the summer when Will turned 12?" (*He built a wall.*) Ask, "How does this help prove the point that hard work leads to success?" (*Will didn't think he could build the wall, but he worked hard and proved that he could.*)
- **The theme** of this profile could be "Hard work brings great rewards." Discuss the following quote from Albert Einstein: "Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration."
- **Follow-up practice on contractions** can be found on p. T6 with the skills sheet "Contractions in Action."

**FLUENCY IN ACTION**  
*Chunking: Using Punctuation Cues***MEETING STATE STANDARDS:**

Students will pause at appropriate points while reading aloud. This is similar to Oklahoma's standard "Use punctuation as a cue for pausing and characterization."

**About the Story:** At a time when African-Americans were treated as second-class citizens, this athlete made history.

**Pre-Reading Skill Builder**

- **Terms to know:** *track and field* (sports that include running, pole-vaulting, shot-putting, and broad-jumping); *Adolf Hitler* (dictator responsible for the killing of 6 million Jews)
- **Places to know:** Cleveland, Ohio; Illinois; Berlin, Germany; northern Europe
- **Connecting new to known (reading strategy):** Name some problems students have in the beginning of a school year (such as finding the way to classes, making new friends, and adjusting to new subjects), and discuss possible solutions. Remind students of this problem/solution technique as they read about Jesse Owens.

**Post-Reading Skill Builder**

- **Math fun!** Since Jesse Owens was born in September 1913, how old was he when he died in March 1980? (66) How old was he when he won his four gold medals in the summer of 1936? (22)
- **Problems/solutions:** Can your students list some of the problems Jesse faced during his life? (*He picked cotton as a child, his family moved when he was young, and he was treated unfairly as a black athlete.*) How did he handle each problem?
- **Surprise, surprise!** Did your students expect Lutz Long, Jesse's German opponent, to be kind to him? In literature, we call such unexpected events *irony*.
- **Find out more** about Jesse Owens by visiting [www.jesse-owens.org](http://www.jesse-owens.org). At [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), you can type in "1936 Jesse Owens" and see footage of Jesse, Hitler, and the crowds in the Olympic stadium.

**READING COMP IN ACTION**  
*Practicing Assessment***MEETING STATE STANDARDS:**

Students will demonstrate comprehension of a text. This is similar to Pennsylvania's standard "Demonstrate comprehension in reading."

**About the Story:** When this teen's family lost their home to foreclosure, she helped make a video about the economy. President Obama saw the video and met with the creators.

**Words in Action Vocabulary:** economy, fees, insurance, affecting, focus

**Pre-Reading Skill Builder**

- **Starter: Is anybody there?** How effective do your students feel when they express dissatisfaction?
- **Survey** the article by reading the title, the captions for the four photos, and the vocabulary.
- **After reading the vocabulary** on p. 13, challenge students to create one long sentence using all of the words in it. (For example: *The economy is affecting me because of the high insurance fees, so I'm forced to focus on money.)*

**Post-Reading Skill Builder**

- **Comprehension "one-on-one":** Identify one key word or term from each paragraph, and have students summarize or define it. For example, in paragraph 1, you could say, *Evelyn Aguilar – Evelyn shook hands with President Obama.* In Paragraph 2, *economy – Evelyn's family has had problems because of the worsening economy.*
- **Strategy: connecting text to self:** Tell students, "You read how Evelyn spoke from her heart. What is in your heart that you feel strongly about? Write about it!" After editing students' work, have them e-mail it to someone who would be interested in reading it, such as your principal or mayor.
- **Curriculum connection: Social Studies—** How has the economy affected students and their parents, school, community, and country? If possible, have someone who has lived through the Depression of the 1930s come to your class and discuss how life was back then.

**MAP SKILLS IN ACTION**  
*Reading a Map***MEETING STATE STANDARDS:**

Students will locate information on a map. This is similar to Wisconsin's standard "Use multiple sources to identify and locate information pertinent to research."

**About the Story:** Migration paths for jaguars are in danger. Some people are working hard to help.

**Pre-Reading Skill Builder**

- **Vocabulary practice:** After reading the words and definitions on p. 16, make a matching game on the board:
  - ♦ predators                      group living in a certain place
  - ♦ habitat                              science of living things
  - ♦ prey                                      hunters
  - ♦ population                      hunted
  - ♦ biology                              home

**Post-Reading Skill Builder**

- **Reading checkup:** Ask these true/false questions (the first letters of which spell out JAGUAR) to check understanding:
  - ♦ **J**aguars live in Central and South America. (T)
  - ♦ **A**nimals' natural homes are called habitats. (T)
  - ♦ **G**oing from one place to another is how female jaguars find mates. (F)
  - ♦ **U**nderstanding jaguars is easier with camera traps. (T)
  - ♦ **A** common way to tell one jaguar from another is to look at its tongue. (F)
  - ♦ **R**egular people, like Megan Maher, can help to save endangered animals. (T)
- **Why** have jaguars lost so much of their habitat? (*Houses and roads have taken over.*) **Why** do male jaguars need to travel? (*To find a mate that is not a close relative.*) **Why** is counting jaguars difficult? (*They live in thick forests and stay away from humans.*)

**WRITING IN ACTION**  
***Distinguishing Facts From Opinions***

**MEETING STATE STANDARDS:**

The student will understand the use of facts and opinions in writing. This is similar to Florida's standard "The student will write persuasive text that establishes and develops a controlling idea, using appropriate supporting arguments and detailed evidence."

**About the Story:** Some schools around the country are switching to a four-day week in order to save money.

**Pre-Reading Skill Builder**

- **What's the downside?** This topic may be difficult to "argue" because many people would not want to work five days per week when they could work four! Have students act like the lawyer presenting the other side of the argument. Or, they could take the point of view of parents who would have to worry about child care.
- **Fact vs. opinion** can be tricky to understand. With opinions, look for adjectives such as *silly, pretty, right, wrong, funny, happy, and sad*, as these are all subjective. A fact must be provable, which means you can find the answer in a dictionary, textbook, or other source.

**Post-Reading Skill Builder**

- **Role-play debate:** After reading the debate, suggest how different types of people would have opposing viewpoints on this topic. Examples are teachers, students, and working parents. Divide the class into these three groups of stakeholders, give each group index cards, and have them list the points to consider for *their* role. Have each group write one paragraph from that point of view.
- **Fact and opinion:** Identify the words that make statements 2 and 3 opinions (better and annoying). List other words that would make a sentence an opinion.
- **Practice differentiating fact from opinion** by completing "Prove It!" on p. T8.

**Read 180<sup>®</sup> Teachers:**

*These are our suggestions for the best way to use each feature with your Read 180<sup>®</sup> program.*

**"Will Smith" and "No-School Fridays":**

These features are just right for your 20-minute whole-group instruction period. With their accompanying activities, each one should take just about 20 minutes to complete.

**"Jesse Owens: Olympic Champion," "Speaking From the Heart," and "Tracking Jaguars":**

These features are most useful for *small-group instruction*. Students can read the text together. "Jesse Owens: Olympic Champion" comes with a problem/solution activity on p. 11. "Speaking From the Heart" is followed by a 10-question comprehension quiz on p. 15. "Tracking Jaguars" has a map-reading activity on p. 19.

**Quest Crew:** This activity is best used for *independent reading*. The high-interest subject matter encourages students to improve their vocabulary.

**NCTE & IRA STANDARDS FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

1. Students read a wide range of materials, from books to periodicals to electronic resources.
2. Students read a wide range of literary works.
3. Students apply a wide range of reading strategies in order to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts.
4. Students adjust their writing and speaking styles to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences.
5. Students alter their process of writing to adjust their style of communication.
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure and language conventions to create, critique, and discuss texts.
7. Students research issues using a variety of sources, then synthesize the data to communicate their discoveries for a purpose or to an audience.
8. Students conduct research using a variety of information and technological resources.
9. Students develop an understanding and respect for languages of other cultures and the diversity of English language use.
10. Students who are learning English use their primary language to find and develop competency in the English language arts and understanding of other content areas.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to achieve their own goals (for learning, enjoyment, etc.).

# ACTION SOLUTIONS

## Answers to skills activities

### VOCABULARY IN ACTION:

#### CONTRACTIONS, P. T4

can't = cannot

he'll = he will

#### PROBLEM SOLVED! P. 11

1. Jesse practiced with Coach Riley before school.
2. Jesse told Dave that they could make a greater difference by being good athletes than by fighting.
3. The Olympic Committee told Hitler that they would hold the Games somewhere else if he made trouble.
4. Lutz Long, who was competing against Jesse, gave him some helpful advice. Jesse won!

#### SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW, P. 15

1. b; 2. b; 3. a; 4. b; 5. d; 6. a; 7. b;
8. a; 9. c; 10. Answers may vary.

### FIND THE JAGUARS, P. 19

1. a; 2. d; 3. b; 4. c

### SCHOOL FACTS AND OPINIONS, P. 21

1. F; 2. O; 3. O; 4. F; 5. F

### READ IT RIGHT, P. 23

1. The meatball hero
2. The veggie hero
3. b
4. The meatball hero
5. The meatball hero
6. Yes
7. b
8. veggie hero
9. d
10. Answers may vary.

### QUEST CREW, P. 24

1. C; 2. O; 3. L; 4. H; 5. I

**Answer:** COOL HAIR

### CONTRACTIONS IN ACTION, P. T6

1. do not
2. There is
3. have not
4. I am
5. was not
6. he is
7. you are
8. could not
9. you have
10. they are

### PROVE IT! P. T8

1. F; 2. O; 3. F; 4. F; 5. O;
6. O; 7. F; 8. O; 9. F; 10. F

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# Contractions in Action

**A contraction is a word made from two other words. An apostrophe (') takes the place of one or more letters. In each of the sentences below, a contraction is underlined. Next to each sentence, write the two words that make up the contraction.**

**Example:** I'll be home for dinner. I will

1. I don't like cats.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. There's a long line in the lunchroom.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. I haven't gone swimming today.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. I'm really glad to be back in school.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. I went to Lilly's house, but she wasn't home.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. I want Lucas on my team because he's so fast.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. I hope you're having a happy birthday!

\_\_\_\_\_

8. I was late because I couldn't find my keys.

\_\_\_\_\_

9. If you've finished your dinner, you can have dessert.

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Marc and Antonio are coming over when they're done with their homework.

\_\_\_\_\_

# Got Problems?

**Everybody has problems. In order to solve a problem, you need to know *who* has the problem, *what* the problem is, and *why* the problem is happening. Then you can think of ways to solve the problem.**

**Choose a story from this issue of *Action*. Find a problem someone had in the story. On the graphic organizer below, write the main facts of the problem. Then think of three ways in which the problem could have been solved. (You may include the way it was solved in the story.)**

**Possible Solution:**

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**Possible Solution:**

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**Problem**

**Who:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What** \_\_\_\_\_

**Why** \_\_\_\_\_

**Possible Solution:**

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# Action Skills Sheet

## SKILL: Distinguishing Fact From Opinion

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Prove It!

In this issue of *Action*, you learned some facts about Will Smith, jaguars, Jesse Owens, and other topics. You also read some opinions. Can you tell the difference? A fact is a statement that can be proved. An opinion is a statement of feeling or belief, and can't be proved. There are 10 sentences below.

Write **F** next to the facts and **O** next to the opinions.

1. Jesse Owens won four gold medals at the 1936 Olympics in Germany. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Will Smith is the best movie actor in America. \_\_\_\_\_
3. In the past 100 years, jaguars have lost more than half their habitat. \_\_\_\_\_
4. With a four-day week, schools could save money on electricity. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Hitler was the worst leader the world has known. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Jaguars are the most beautiful animals in South America. \_\_\_\_\_
7. In March, President Obama gave a speech on TV about education. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Not having school on Fridays is the best idea ever! \_\_\_\_\_
9. Will Smith formed the group DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince and won the first-ever Grammy award in a rap category. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Evelyn Aguilar was in a video. \_\_\_\_\_