

Sample of Cover and Selected Pages

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CODE READER™

Making Difficult Words Easy

Code Reader Books provide codes with “sound keys” to help read difficult words. For example, a word that may be difficult to read is “unicorn,” so it might be followed by a code like this: unicorn (*YOO-nih-korn*). By providing codes with phonetic sound keys, Code Reader Books make reading easier and more enjoyable.

Examples of Code Reader™ Keys

Long a sound (as in make):

a (*with a silent e*) or **ay**

Examples: able (*AY-bul*); break (*brake*)

Short i sound (as in sit): **i** or **ih**

Examples: myth (*mith*); mission (*MIH-shun*)

Long i sound (as in by):

i (*with a silent e*) or **y**

Examples: might (*mite*); bicycle (*BY-sih-kul*)

Keys for the long o sound (as in hope):

o (*with a silent e*) or **oh**

Examples: molten (*MOLE-ten*); ocean (*OH-shen*)

Codes use dashes between syllables (*SIH-luh-buls*), and stressed syllables have capital letters.

To see more Code Reader sound keys, see page 44.

REALLY STRANGE FACTS

WRITTEN BY
CHARIS MATHER

CODE READER™

Really Strange Facts

A Code Reader™ Chapter Book

Blue Series

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Patent Pending.

Code Reader books are designed using an innovative system of methods to create and include phonetic codes to enhance the readability of text.

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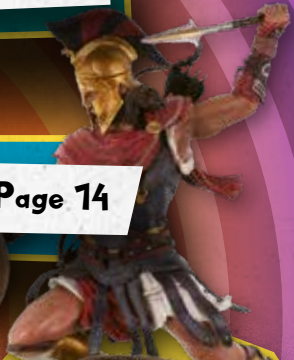
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Words that look like
this are explained
in the glossary.



YOU **COULDN'T** MAKE IT UP

What's the strangest (*STRANE-jest*), most unlikely thing you can imagine (*ih-MAJ-in*)? An army attacking the sea? A volcano (*vol-KAY-noh*) being born overnight? Music (*MYOO-zik*) so good that it makes food taste better? An elevator that goes all the way to the Moon???

Well, you're in for a surprise . . . because all of those things are more real than you might think.

Okay, okay, so maybe not the elevator one. But everything else is totally (*TOH-tuh-lee*) true!

If you find that hard to believe (*bee-LEEVE*), I don't blame you. Some of these facts are pretty wild, but I promise (*PROM-is*) I haven't made them up. By the time you've finished reading, you'll know all of this terrific trivia (*TRIV-ee-uh*).

trivia

fun but useless
(*YOOS-les*) facts

Don't expect everyone to believe you right away. Some of your friends might not be able (*AY-bul*) to get their minds around the fact that things as strange as this could actually (*AK-choo-uh-lee*) be true. They might need proof or want to check the facts themselves.

THE OLD WAYS WERE ODD WAYS

Everyone has their own odd little quirks. You know, the unusual (*un-YOO-zhoo-uhl*) ideas or habits that makes them them. But if you look into the quirks of people who lived in ancient (*AYN-chent*) times . . . well, you might find some of them more than a little odd.

When you read my collection of strange facts from the past, you'll see exactly what I mean. The deeper you dig, the stranger the facts get.

ancient
from the distant past



WAIT, THE ANCIENTS DID WHAT?



ROME

Roman (*ROH-man*) emperors were really something. Emperor Caligula (*kuh-LIG-yoo-luh*) is said to have once (*wuns*) made his army attack the sea. Why? He wanted to battle the Roman god of the sea. Come on, Caligula! Attacking the sea makes about as much sense as cutting a cake with a wet tissue (*TIH-shoo*).

The Roman emperors had some of the weirdest (*WEER-dest*) feasts. Mice, rotted fish guts, cow udders, flamingo (*fluh-MING-goh*) tongues (*tungz*), and lamb (*lam*) brains were all on the menu (*MEN-yoo*).

emperor
a ruler very similar
to a king

Brains? Were the Romans zombies?





EGYPT (EE-jipt)

The ancient Egyptians (*ee-JIP-shunz*) really loved cats. When a pet cat died, the whole family shaved their eyebrows off to mourn (*morn*). I'm sure the cats would have found this very touching (*TUCH-ing*) . . . if they were alive.

Fake FACT



Have you heard that shaving makes hair grow back thicker? That's a myth (*mith*)! The end of the hair closer to the skin is thicker than the tip. Cutting the tip makes the thicker end stand out more.

myth

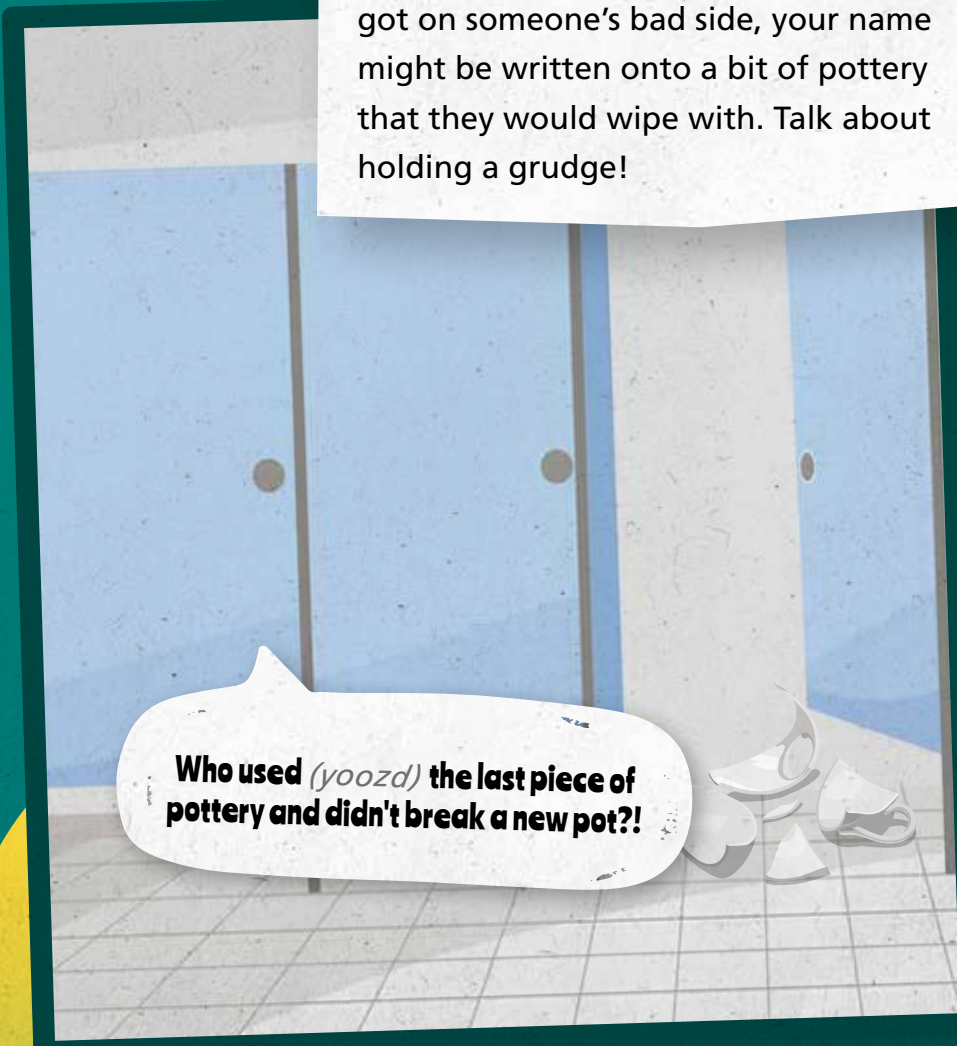
a story that people used (*yoost*) to believe, but now we know isn't true



So, that's what the ancients did for those they cared about. But what about those they didn't?

GREECE

The ancient Greeks didn't have toilet paper. Instead, they wiped with small stones or bits of broken pottery. If you got on someone's bad side, your name might be written onto a bit of pottery that they would wipe with. Talk about holding a grudge!



Who used (*yoozd*) the last piece of pottery and didn't break a new pot?!

DEADLY DROPS

History is full of horrible deaths, but some are extra horrible. In 1184, about 60 nobles (*NOH-bulz*) died when the floor collapsed (*kuh-LAPST*) and dropped them into a pit full of **sewage** (*SOO-ij*) from their toilets.

There's nothing noble about this!

nobles

people who were born into or gained an important position (*puh-ZIH-shun*)

It turns out that building (*BIL-ding*) a meeting room with a weak floor over a big **cesspit** (*SES-pit*) was a bad idea (*I-DEE-uh*). It became known as the "Erfurt latrine (*luh-TREEN*) disaster (*dih-ZAS-tur*)." Bet you can't think of a way to go that stinks more than that!

The horrible deaths get stranger. In 1518, hundreds of people in the city of Strasbourg (*STRÖS-burg*) in France danced until they dropped—literally. These unfortunate (*un-FOR-choo-net*) people danced without stopping for days and days. They seemed to have no control over their bodies. Anyway, they eventually (*eh-VEN-choo-uh-lee*) got so worn out that many of them dropped down dead.



Why couldn't they stop? No one knows. Your guess (*ges*) is as good as mine.

TRENDS THAT SHOULD NEVER HAVE TAKEN OFF

FASHIONABLE (FASH-SHUN-UH-BUL) FRUIT (FROOT)

Try to imagine the trendiest, most popular (*POP-yoo-lur*) person ever. Did you imagine them with a pineapple (*PINE-ap-pul*) under their arm? No? In that case, I'm sorry to say that they're not trendy enough (*ee-NUF*) for the olden days. Back then, holding a pineapple was more impressive than any fancy handbag.



Is that a designer (*deh-ZY-nur*) pineapple?

Pineapples used to be super (*SOO-pur*) expensive. The best way to show off your wealth was to take a pineapple with you wherever you went. Only the richest people could afford these fashionable fruits.

SMILING SWEETLY

Sugar (*shōō-gur*) was another sign (*sine*) that you had money (*MUN-nee*). And what is the best way to show off that you were a snazzy sugar-eater? Letting your teeth rot, of course! The blacker, the better.

Queen Elizabeth I used toothpaste made with sugar. If you like having teeth, I would not suggest (*suh-JEST*) trying her brand of toothpaste.



What if you didn't have enough sugar to make your teeth rot? You could fake it with black dye (*dy*), like this woman (*WUH-mun*).