


**Reading Tip**

 You may be interested in reading this passage to better understand lightning.

# LOOK OUT FOR LIGHTNING

## Skill Overview

All meaningful reading needs a purpose. When readers understand the purpose for reading a particular text, they can select the appropriate reading strategies to meet their reading goals.



Lightning bolts streak through the sky toward the ground.



Lightning, one of nature's most powerful forces, can kill people and animals, **destroy** buildings and trees, and start raging forest fires. Although lightning usually comes with a thunderstorm, it can also occur during snowstorms, during sandstorms, and in the clouds of a volcanic eruption. Every second, **approximately** 100 lightning **bolts strike** Earth. Areas closest to the equator get the most strikes.

Lightning maintains the electrical balance in clouds. Everything has tiny **particles** called *electrons* and *protons*. Lightning occurs when electrons move toward protons. Electrons jump at high speeds to protons within the same cloud, in another cloud, or on the ground. When electrons move, the air gets so hot that its temperature exceeds that of the Sun's surface. The air glows, and the burst of extreme heat makes the moist air **explode**, causing the sound waves we call *thunder*. That's why a clap of thunder always follows a lightning flash.

You have probably seen jagged lightning bolts streaking from the sky toward the ground. Usually these bolts hit the tallest thing in the area. In fact, the Eiffel Tower in Paris gets struck by lightning dozens of times each year. The people who design skyscrapers know this; therefore, skyscrapers have systems to keep lightning strikes from causing damage.

No one knows exactly when or where lightning will strike, but you can take steps to avoid getting hit by it. If you can, go inside at the first sign of lightning—it's much safer indoors. However, lightning can still reach into a building, so don't talk on the phone or stand at a window. Do not swim if there is lightning in the area. If you are out in a boat, get down inside the cabin. If you are caught outside away from buildings, get into a car or a truck. Never take shelter under a tree, as trees can be struck by lightning, and the electricity can transfer through them and into you.

Even though lightning is **hazardous**, it is **essential** for our planet. Every bolt produces **ozone** gas, which protects us from the Sun's strong radiation. Each lightning bolt also cleans the air by making pieces of pollution fall to the ground.

## Vocabulary

### **destroy**

to damage something so badly that it cannot be used

### **approximately**

about; close to

### **bolt**

a flash of lightning that looks like a white line against the sky

### **strike**

to hit with force

### **particle**

an extremely small piece of matter

### **Hazardous**

dangerous

### **essential**

necessary and important

### **ozone**

a poisonous form of oxygen

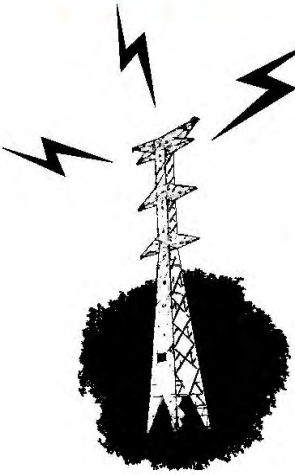
The Eiffel Tower in Paris gets struck by lightning dozens of times each year.



# Reading Skills Comprehension Practice

## Part 1

Explain why people might want to read about lightning.



Maybe readers would read  
about lightning because

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Here are some purposes for reading:

-  for understanding
-  for enjoyment
-  to solve problems
-  to predict outcomes
-  to answer specific questions
-  to form an opinion

## Part 2

Use the passage to answer the questions below.

1. What was your purpose for reading this passage?

*My purpose for reading was*

2. Was your purpose for reading a good match for this passage? Why or why not?

3. Why is it important to know your purpose before you start reading?

## Part 3

Suggest a type of text to match each purpose below.

1. for understanding

2. for enjoyment

3. to solve problems

4. to predict outcomes

5. to answer specific questions

6. to form an opinion



## Comprehension Review

Fill in the best answer for each question.

1 You might read this passage if you want to learn about \_\_\_\_\_

- A today's weather.
- B the Eiffel Tower.
- C lightning.
- D lights.

2 This passage would not be appropriate for people who want to read about \_\_\_\_\_

- A what happens when you get struck by lightning.
- B what causes lightning.
- C safety procedures in the event of lightning.
- D the benefits of lightning.

3 *Even though lightning is hazardous, it is essential for our planet.*

What is the purpose of this statement?

- A to tell why lightning occurs
- B to tell what lightning does for the planet
- C to explain the hazards of lightning
- D to tell how lightning occurs

4 What is the first thing you should do in the event of lightning?

- A Take shelter under a tree.
- B Get off your cell phone.
- C Get away from windows.
- D Go indoors if possible.

5 Why do you think the Eiffel Tower is struck by lightning so often?

- A The Eiffel Tower is unique.
- B The Eiffel Tower is a natural conductor of electricity.
- C The Eiffel Tower is a very tall structure.
- D The Eiffel Tower is in a special area that gets a lot of lightning.

6 According to the article, which statement about lightning is true?

- A Lightning is caused by electrons and neutrons.
- B Areas closest to the equator get the most strikes.
- C Every second, about 1,000 lightning bolts strike Earth.
- D Scientists know exactly where lightning will strike.

## Word Power

Choose the English word from the Vocabulary list that correctly matches the definition.



1 a flash of lightning that looks like a white line against the sky

\_\_\_\_\_



2 necessary and important

\_\_\_\_\_



3 dangerous

\_\_\_\_\_



4 about; close to

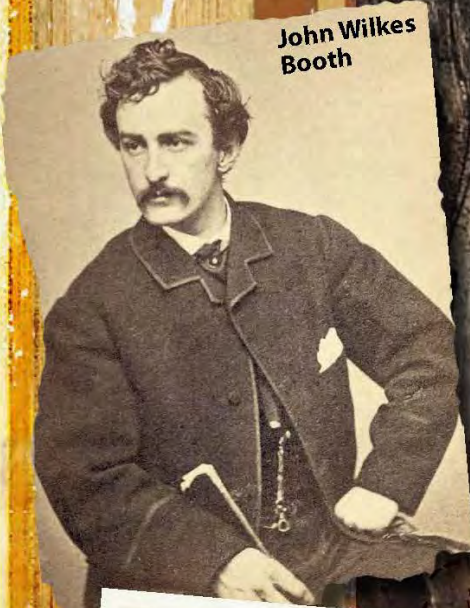
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# The Death of a President

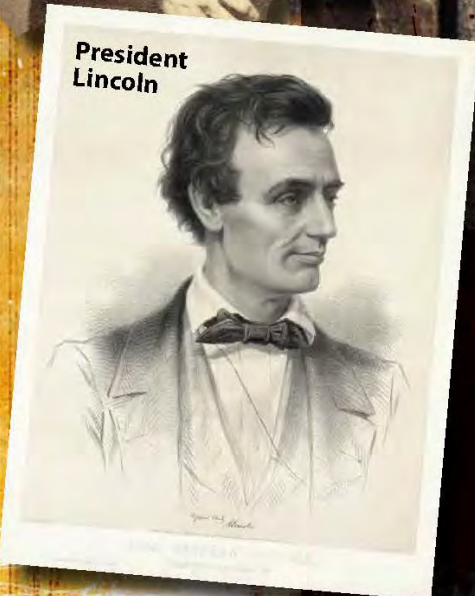
## Reading Tip

- Follow the instruction in Part 1 before you listen to and read the passage.
- One step in previewing a text is to **read the title**. You can use the title to make a prediction about what is to come.

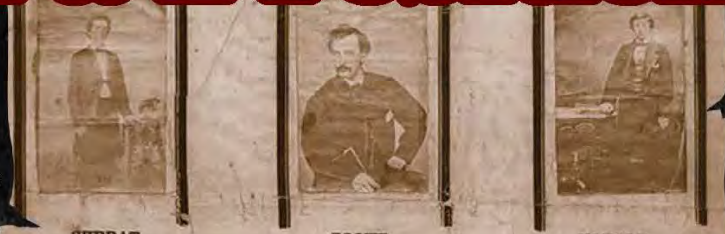
A reward poster for Booth and his accomplices



John Wilkes  
Booth



President  
Lincoln



SURRAT.

BOOTH.

HAROLD.

War Department, Washington, April 20, 1865,

 **\$100,000 REWARD!**

# THE MURDERER

Of our late beloved President, Abraham Lincoln,  
**IS STILL AT LARGE.**

## \$50,000 REWARD

Will be paid by this Department for his apprehension, in addition to any reward offered by Municipal Authorities or State Executives.

## \$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of JOHN H. SURRATT, one of Booth's Accomplices.

## \$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of David C. Harold, another of Booth's accomplices.

LIBERAL REWARDS will be paid for any information that shall conduce to the arrest of either of the above-named criminals, or their accomplices.

All persons harboring or secreting the said persons, or either of them, or aiding or assisting their concealment or escape, will be treated as accomplices in the murder of the President and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State, and shall be subject to trial before a Military Commission and the punishment of DEATH.

Let the stain of innocent blood be removed from the land by the arrest and punishment of the murderers.

All good citizens are exhorted to aid public justice on this occasion. Every man should consider his own conscience charged with this solemn duty, and rest neither night nor day until it be accomplished.

**EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.**

DESCRIPTIONS.—BOOTH is five feet 7 or 8 inches high, slender build, high forehead, black hair, black eyes, and wears a heavy black moustache.

JOHN H. SURRAT is about 5 feet 9 inches. Hair rather thin and dark; eyes rather light; no beard. Would weigh 145 or 150 pounds. Complexion rather pale and clear, with color in his cheeks. Wore light clothes of fine quality. Shoulders square; cheek bones rather prominent; chin narrow; ears projecting at the top; forehead rather low and square, but broad. Part of his hair on the right side; neck rather long. His lips are firmly set. A slim man.

DAVID C. HAROLD is five feet six inches high, hair dark, eyes dark, eyebrows rather heavy, full face, nose short, hand short and fleshy, feet small, instep high, round bodied, naturally quick and active, slightly closes his eyes when looking at a person.

NOTICE.—In addition to the above, State and other authorities have offered rewards amounting to almost one hundred thousand dollars, making an aggregate of about **TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS.**

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## Skill Overview

Previewing the title, headings, pictures, and textual clues before reading can help readers **identify the important concepts** in a text. Previewing also allows readers to **activate prior knowledge**, **develop an interest in the text**, and **formulate questions and predictions** about it.

## Vocabulary

### surrender

to give up completely

### agreement

a decision or arrangement, often formal and written, between two or more people or groups

### attend

to go to an event or a place

### balcony

the upstairs seats in a theater

### approach

to come near to something or someone

### tyrant

a ruler who has unlimited power over other people and uses it unfairly and cruelly

### escape

to get free from something

### assassination

the killing of an important person

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The U.S. Civil War ended on April 9, 1865, when Confederate General Robert E. Lee **surrendered** to Union General Ulysses S. Grant. The two men met and signed an **agreement** to end the war.

Most Southerners were upset that the South had lost the war. John Wilkes Booth was among them. Booth wanted to be a hero to the South. So he and some others created a plan to kill President Abraham Lincoln.

On April 14, 1865, Lincoln **attended** a play at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. He was sitting with his wife and other guests in a special **balcony**. Booth **approached** the balcony where Lincoln was sitting. Lincoln's guard had left his post, so no one stopped Booth as he shot Lincoln in the head. Booth then boldly jumped from the balcony onto the stage. As he escaped the theater, Booth shouted, "Sic semper tyrannis!" which is Latin for "thus always to **tyrants**." He meant that all tyrants, which is how he viewed Lincoln, should be killed. Booth used a horse to **escape** from Ford's Theatre and ride to Virginia.

Sadly, Lincoln died the next day. His vice president, Andrew Johnson, became the seventeenth president of the United States.

Booth thought that people in the South would be proud of what he had done, but this was not the case. Most Southerners were upset over Lincoln's death because Lincoln would have wanted a peaceful Reconstruction. Now, they would be forced to deal with Congress instead of Lincoln, and they were not sure what demands the congressmen would make.

Federal troops found Booth hiding in a barn in Virginia. He refused to give up, so the troops took action by setting the barn on fire. Eventually, troopers shot into the barn, killing Booth. Later, the other people involved in the **assassination** plan were hanged.

