



# S A M P L E R

Selections from Gentle Shepherd's  
TYPING PRACTICE PAGES



# Typing Practice Pages Sampler

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## THE DESERT

Deserts are lands where the climate is very dry.

Deserts are often hot, though they become cool at night.

It can be months or years between rains in a desert.

Desert plants have thick bark and waxy leaves to help them save water. Some store water in their roots or stems.

Some examples of desert plants are cactuses, aloe vera, and yucca.

Many desert animals stay out of the sun in the daytime, and come out at night.

Insects, spiders, reptiles, birds, and small nocturnal carnivores live in the desert.

A place in the desert where there are underground springs that provide water is called an oasis.

The largest desert in the world is the Sahara in North Africa.

In the Southwestern United States, there is a river that flows through the desert.

In some deserts, minerals are mined; in others, oil is pumped.

There are deserts in North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Australia.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DESERT

Does it rain very often in the desert? No

Do spiders live in deserts? Yes

What is the largest desert in the world? The Sahara, in Africa, is the largest.

What is pumped from under the earth in some deserts? Oil

Where do some desert plants store water? Water is stored in their roots or stems.

Are deserts hot all the time? No; they are cool at night.

When do most desert animals become active? They come out at night.

What is an oasis? It is a place where there are underground springs that provide water.

What two continents contain no deserts? Europe and Antarctica

## THE TUNDRA

The tundra is an area of very cold land in northern Canada, Alaska, Iceland, Greenland, northern Scandinavia, and Siberia.

Trees don't grow in the tundra; only grasses, mosses, and lichens grow there.

The land is covered with snow for at least eight months. In the summer, the top layer of land thaws, and plants can grow. The rest of the land stays frozen; it is called the permafrost.

Some animals and birds that live in the tundra are white, such as the arctic hare and the snowy owl.

Some plants in the tundra have dark red leaves—this coloring lets them absorb more heat from the sun.

In the summer the sun shines nearly all the time; in the winter it is dark nearly all the time.

It can be as cold as 60 degrees below zero in the winter.

Some animals found in the tundra are the arctic hare, the arctic fox, the lemming, the musk ox, the wolf, the polar bear, and the caribou.

Over 100 kinds of birds live in the tundra in the summer. Only a few birds stay year-round.

Some insects that live in the tundra are mosquitoes, flies, moths, grasshoppers, blackflies, and arctic bumblebees.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TUNDRA

What kinds of plants grow in the tundra? Grasses, mosses, and lichens

What is the permafrost? It is land that is always frozen.

How many degrees below zero does it get sometimes in the tundra?  
60 degrees

What color of leaves will absorb more heat? Dark red

How many kinds of birds live in the tundra in the summer? Over  
100

Are there bumblebees in the tundra? Yes, arctic bumblebees

Are there bears in the tundra? Yes, polar bears

How many months is the land covered with snow? Eight months

Where is the tundra found? In northern Canada, Alaska, Iceland,  
Greenland, northern Scandinavia, and Siberia



## FORESTS

Forests are areas covered with trees. They may be broadleaf trees or needle leaf trees, but there are lots of trees.

In areas with long, cold winters, the forest is called the Taiga. The trees are almost all needle leaf trees, which are green all year.

Some animals of the Taiga are moose, beaver, wolverine, red squirrel, and snowshoe rabbit.

In areas with shorter, milder winters the forest may be a deciduous forest (only broadleaf trees) or may have both needle leaf and broadleaf trees.

Some animals of the temperate (milder winter) forest are black bear, gray squirrel, raccoon, white-tailed deer, and turkey.

The Taiga is found in Canada, Alaska, and parts of Europe and Asia.

The temperate forest is found in the United States, Canada, Europe, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and southern Chile.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT FORESTS

Are the trees in the Taiga needle leaf or broadleaf trees? Needle leaf

Does a snowshoe rabbit live in the Taiga or in a temperate forest?  
The Taiga

Does a turkey live in the Taiga or in a temperate forest? A  
temperate forest

Which forest is colder? The Taiga

Where is the temperate forest found? In the United States, Canada,  
Europe, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and southern Chile

What is a forest with only broadleaf trees called? A deciduous  
forest

Where is the Taiga found? In Canada, Alaska, and parts of Europe  
and Asia

What is there a lot of in the forest? Trees

## RIVERS

A river starts at its source and ends at its mouth.

The mouth may flow into another river, a lake, or the sea.

Some rivers are intermittent; the river bed is dry part of the time. These kinds of rivers are found in deserts.

The longest river in the world is the Nile, in Egypt.

The Amazon River, in Brazil, carries more water than any other river. It is the largest river in the world.

The Mississippi River travels the length of the United States.

Europe's largest river is the Volga, in Russia.

There are flights of steps leading into the water at many places along the Ganges River in India.

Travel on the Congo River in Africa is interrupted in some places by waterfalls. These are bypassed by short railway lines.

There are 25 bridges that cross the Tiber River in the city of Rome, Italy.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT RIVERS

What kind of river is sometimes found in a desert? An intermittent river

Do rivers flow into lakes sometimes? Yes

Do rivers flow into other rivers sometimes? Yes

What is the source of a river? It is the place where the river starts.

What is the mouth of a river? It is the place where the river ends.

What river travels the length of the United States? The Mississippi

How many bridges are there across the Tiber River in Rome? 25

Where is the largest river in Europe, the Volga? In Russia

What do travelers on the Congo River do when they reach waterfalls? They go on railway lines for a short while, and then get back on the river.

Why is the Amazon River the largest river even though it isn't the longest? It carries the most water.

In what country are there steps that lead into the water in many places along the Ganges River? In India

What is unique about the Nile River? It is the longest river in the world.

## METALS

Metals are substances with certain characteristics: when polished they shine, they are good conductors of heat and electricity, they can be formed into useful shapes without breaking—including being stretched into wire and squeezed into a sheet.

Gold can be made into thinner sheets and finer wire than any other metal.

Metals differ in weight. The heaviest metal is osmium. It is 22  $\frac{1}{2}$  times as heavy as water. A one foot cube of osmium weighs 1,400 lbs. The lightest metal, lithium, weighs about half as much as water. Aluminum, a light metal, is used for building airplanes.

Metals also differ in melting points. Tungsten, used for electric light bulb filaments, has the highest melting point of any metal—over 6000 degrees Fahrenheit. Mercury, a metal used in thermometers, has a low melting point; it is liquid at room temperature.

The metal that is the best conductor of heat and electricity is silver. Next best is copper.

Some metals can be found in the earth in their pure state. Many other metals are found combined with other substances in rocks called ores.

Taking metals or ores from the earth is called mining.

Some countries that do a lot of mining are the United States, Canada, and South Africa. Some metals are found only in certain countries. For example, cobalt is mined in Zaire and in Finland.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT METALS

How does the weight of osmium, the heaviest metal, compare to the weight of water? It is 22 ½ times as heavy as water.

How much does the lightest metal weigh, compared to water? Lithium, the lightest metal, is half as heavy as water.

What metal is the best conductor of heat and electricity? Silver

What are metals combined with in ores? They are combined with other substances.

What characteristic of metals explains why metals are used so frequently in many different products? They can be formed into useful shapes.

Name three countries that do a lot of mining for metals: the United States, Canada, South Africa

Which metal can be made into very thin sheets and very fine wire? Gold

Which metal is liquid at room temperature? Mercury

## PANDA BEARS

The panda bear lives in mountainous bamboo forests in west-central China.

Its fur is white, with black eye patches, ears, legs, feet, chest, shoulders, and arms.

Panda bears are slow-moving animals. They spend about half or more of every day eating.

To eat, they sit down and hold bamboo with their forepaws. The forepaw is different from other bears; they have a thumb, so they can grasp.

Their paws have short claws, making it easy for them to climb trees.

In Chinese, their name, “Daxiongmao,” means “large bear cat.”

Pandas are 5-6 feet high and weigh over 200 pounds.

The panda is endangered, because its habitat has shrunk as people have farmed and developed land nearby.

There are over 100 pandas in captivity, and about 1000 in the wild.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT PANDA BEARS

How much of each day does a panda spend eating? Half, or more

Can pandas climb trees? Yes

What one country do wild pandas live in? China

How is the panda's forepaw different from other bears? They have a thumb, so they can grasp.

What do panda bears eat? They eat bamboo.

What does the Chinese name for panda bear mean? Large bear cat

What colors is a panda bear? Black and white

How tall is a panda bear? 5-6 feet

How heavy is a panda bear? Over 200 pounds

Is the panda an endangered species? Yes

About how many pandas are there in the wild? 1000



## ZEBRAS

A zebra is a close relative of the horse. It lives on the African savanna. Zebras are grazing animals, constantly traveling in search of good pastures.

They live in family groups made up of mares and their foals, headed by a single stallion. Male offspring leave the group between the ages of one and four years.

Zebras have a short, upright mane and a tail that is tufted at the end. Each zebra has its own, unique, black and white stripe pattern.

The stripes act as a form of camouflage.

Zebras are hunted by lions, hyenas, leopards, and cheetahs.

When they travel, the dominant mare leads the group, and others follow in a hierarchy, each mare followed by its foal. The stallion stays at the back to defend against predators.

Zebras use hooves and teeth in defense. Mares and foals run from danger. Zebras can run 40 mph.

Zebra babies can walk 20 minutes after they are born, and can run after an hour. Zebra babies have brown and white stripes.

Zebras' teeth keep growing all their lives. They spend so much time chewing that their teeth get worn down.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT ZEBRAS

How fast can a zebra run? 40 mph

Is a zebra family group headed by a mare or a stallion? A stallion

How old are male zebras when they leave their original family group? Between one and four years old

What is the zebra always in search of? Good pastures

Is each zebra's stripe pattern different from every other zebra?  
Yes

Do zebras have long manes? No; their manes are very short.

Does the stallion lead the mares when they travel? No, he stays at the back to defend against predators.

How does a zebra defend itself? It uses its hooves and its teeth.

What color stripes do zebra babies have? Brown and white

How soon after it is born can a baby zebra run? One hour

When do zebras' teeth stop growing? Their teeth never stop growing.

## OWLS

There are many kinds of owls, and they live in many different habitats.

Owls have a large head and large eyes.

The owl's eyes are unique among birds, as they are on the front of the head instead of at the side. This gives them better depth perception. However, they can't move their eyes. To look around they have to move their entire head.

Their hearing is the best of all birds; owls can hear small animals or insects in the grass below them.

Owls hunt and eat rodents, insects, frogs, and birds.

They swallow their prey whole, and later cough up an oval pellet of bones and fur.

An owl gets its food by perching on a low branch and then pouncing, or by flying low over the ground and swooping down on prey.

Owls' thick feathers absorb the sounds that their wings make in flight, so that they can fly soundlessly.

Owls are nocturnal; they sleep during the day and come out at night to hunt.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT OWLS

Do owls live in more than one habitat? Yes, they live in many different habitats.

What is unique about the owl's eyes? They are on the front of the head.

When do owls sleep? They sleep during the day.

What do owls hunt? They hunt rodents, insects, frogs, and birds.

What do owls do better than other birds? Hear

How does an owl look around? It moves its entire head.

What shape are the pellets of bones and fur that owls cough up?  
Oval

Do owls chew? No; they swallow their prey whole.

What sound do owls' wings make when they fly? They make no sound.

When do owls hunt? They hunt at night.

## FROGS

Frogs are found all over the world, though there are more in warmer countries.

Frogs are amphibians: they spend part of their lives underwater, and part on land.

They have long, powerful back legs, for jumping, and short front legs. Their feet are webbed, for swimming. Their bulging eyes let them see in all directions. Their skin absorbs water into their body, so they don't have to drink water. Frogs can also breathe through their skin as well as through lungs.

Frogs can be many sizes—the largest frog grows more than one foot long, and the smallest is about ½ inch long.

They eat mainly insects, but also small fish and worms. They catch their prey with their long, sticky tongue, and swallow it in one piece.

Male frogs sing loudly to attract females.

Frogs live near water. They lay their eggs in water. When the eggs hatch, the little frogs are called “tadpoles.” They swim with a tail and breathe with gills, just like fish. Later they lose their tails, grow legs, and develop lungs.

Some frogs live in trees. They have sticky pads on fingers and toes to help cling to the tree trunk.

Frogs who live in cold places hibernate in mud at the bottom of ponds during winter.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT FROGS

What do bulging eyes allow frogs to do? See in all directions

Do frogs need to drink water? No, they absorb it through their skin.

What does it mean to be an amphibian? It means to live part of a life underwater and part on land.

What do frogs' long back legs let them do? Jump

Besides through lungs, how else can frogs breathe? Through their skin

What is a tadpole? A baby frog with a tail and gills

Why do male frogs sing loudly? They sing to attract females.

Where do frogs hibernate in winter? In mud at the bottom of ponds

What do tree frogs have on their fingers and toes? Sticky pads

What do frogs eat? Insects, fish and worms

Describe a frog's tongue: long and sticky

How big is the largest frog? Over one foot long

Where are frogs found? All over the world, near water

## BALD EAGLES

Bald eagles are found over most of North America—from Alaska and Canada to northern Mexico. This species is unique to North America, and it is the U.S.A.'s national bird.

Bald eagles live near large bodies of open water, where there are fish to eat and tall trees to nest and roost in. Half of all bald eagles live in Alaska.

The bald eagle has a blackish-brown back and breast. It has a white head, neck, and tail, and yellow feet and bill. Its beak is large and hooked. It has the largest beak of any bird of prey. It has talons—sharp, strong claws. Both the beak and the talons are like our hair and nails—they grow continuously.

The bald eagle is a very large bird. It is over three feet long from head to tail, and has a wingspread of from six to eight feet.

Eagles often soar on currents of warm air. Several eagles soaring together is called a “kettle of eagles.”

Bald eagles eat fish and small animals that they catch in their talons. They use their beaks to tear food to pieces.

Eagles have very keen eyesight—it is many times better than people's.

A pair of eagles build a nest at the top of a tall tree or on a rocky ledge. Their nest, made of sticks, is called an “aerie.” There are usually two eggs, and both parents feed their young. Bald eaglets are gray at first, then they turn brown. When they are four to five years old they get white head and tail feathers. The aerie becomes larger each year, as the eagles return and add new nesting materials.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT BALD EAGLES

Which state has the most bald eagles? Alaska

How old is a bald eagle when it gets its white feathers? It is four or five years old.

How large is a bald eagle's wingspread? It is six to eight feet.

Describe a bald eagle's habitat: It has a large body of open water, with tall trees in the area nearby.

What is a "kettle of eagles?" Several eagles soaring together

What do bald eagles do with their talons? They catch fish and small animals.

What color is a bald eagle's head, neck, and tail? White

What color is a bald eagle's feet and bill? Yellow

Do eagles have keen eyesight? Yes; it is many times better than people's.

What is an eagle's nest called? It is called an aerie.

Do both parents feed their young? Yes

How many young eagles are there, in a nest? Usually two

Why does an eagle's nest get larger each year? The eagle pair returns and adds new nesting materials.



## Rhyme Pages: Setting Tabs

Since poetry often starts with a capital letter for each line, it is easy to type these rhymes in that way on a computer keyboard (with a computer, each time the “enter” key is hit, the resulting new line is automatically started with a capital letter).

To center the titles of the rhymes, students can use the computer word processor’s centering button.

You will need to make sure your students know how to set tabs. To set a tab using a computer word processor, you left click on the white ruler area just above the page, on the number or measurement marking that you want the tab to be on. Tabs need to be set when typing poems, because poems don’t usually start at the far left margin. When you set a tab, you will be able to create a new starting point for typing the entire poem.

The tab should be set *before* typing the first line. Set the tab, and then hit the “tab” key and start typing. After each line is typed, and “enter” is hit, you simply hit the tab key again, to reach a spot that is aligned with the rest of the poem. If, after you type the first line, you want to move it over a little, you can change the tab by doing a “click and drag” to the right or left.

## An Apple a Day

An apple a day

Keeps the doctor away.

Apple in the morning,

Doctor's warning.

Roast apple at night

Starves the doctor outright.

Eat an apple going to bed,

Knock the doctor on the head.

Three each day, seven days a week,

Ruddy apple, ruddy cheek.

## The Crooked Man

There was a crooked man,  
And he walked a crooked mile.  
He found a crooked sixpence  
Beside a crooked stile.  
He bought a crooked cat,  
Which caught a crooked mouse,  
And they all lived together  
In a little crooked house.

## The Mule

A mule it has two feet behind,  
Two feet it has before;  
You stand behind before you find  
What the two behind be for.

## The Year

There is a tree of praise and dower  
That beareth much of fruit and flower;  
Twelve branches has it, spreading wide,  
Where two-and-fifty nests abide;  
In every nest the birds are seven:  
Thanked be the King of heaven.

## Christmas is Coming

Christmas is coming, the geese are getting fat,  
Please to put a penny in the old man's hat;  
If you haven't got a penny, a ha' penny will do,  
If you haven't got a ha' penny, then God bless you.

We are a pair,  
We can dart here and there,  
Though we always stay in one place.  
We can smile or shed tears,  
Show our pleasure or fears,  
And you'll find us on everyone's face.

(eyes)

What is it?  
It stands on one leg  
With its heart in its head.

(cabbage)

What force and strength cannot get through,  
I, with a gentle touch, can do;  
And many in the street would stand,  
Were I not, as a friend, at hand.

(key)

Gentle Shepherd's complete e-book, *Typing Practice Pages*, has enough pages for a half school year (18 weeks) of typing practice.

Be sure to order a copy for your home or/and school from:

<http://www.gentleshepcurr.com>

