

Real Reading 3

Creating an Authentic Reading Experience

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PEARSON
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ONLINE



MP3 AUDIO

Born Special



Mozart



John McEnroe



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 THINK BEFORE YOU READ

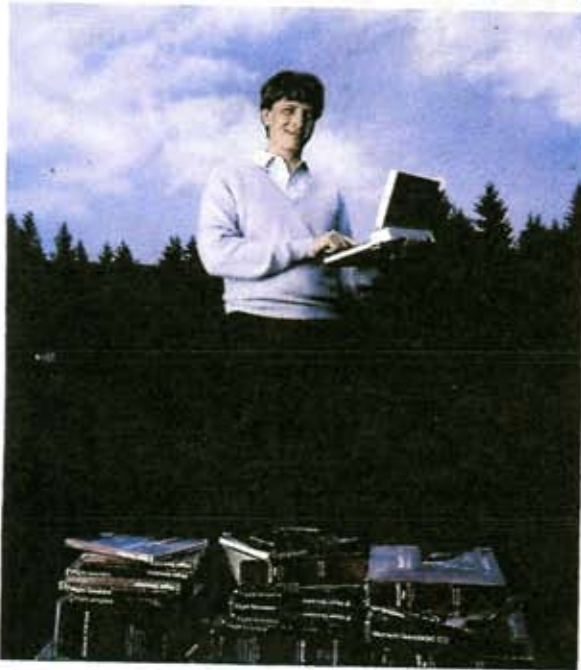
A. Work with a partner. Look at the pictures. Ask and answer the questions. If you don't know a word in English, ask your partner or look in your dictionary. Then write your new words on page 233.

1. Who are the children in the pictures? What is special about them? What are the words in English for children who show unusual ability at a young age?
2. Do you know any children like the children in the pictures? Describe them to your partner.

B. Work with a partner. Ask and answer the questions.

1. What are some of the problems associated with being very talented at something at a very young age?
2. Would you like to have a child with a remarkable ability? Why or why not?

Being a Genius Is Hard Work



PREPARE TO READ

- A.** Look at the words in the list. Write the number(s) next to each word to show what you know. You may be able to write more than one number next to some of the words. You will study all of these words in this chapter.
- I can use the word in a sentence.
 - I know one meaning of the word.
 - I know more than one meaning of the word.
 - I know how to pronounce the word.
- B.** Work with a partner. Look at the pictures. Ask and answer the questions. If you don't know a word in English, ask your partner or look in your dictionary. Then write your new words on page 233.
- Who are the people in the pictures? What do they have in common?
 - In your opinion, are people like those in the pictures "born special" or do they become special through their own efforts? Or is their success a combination of both? Explain.

-
- _____ acquire
 - _____ admiration
 - _____ adversity
 - _____ confirm
 - _____ exceptional
 - _____ exhibit
 - _____ hardly
 - _____ have access to
 - _____ individual
 - _____ minimize
 - _____ obsessively
 - _____ strive
 - _____ toddler
-

▶ READ

Read "Being a Genius Is Hard Work." Check your answers from Exercise C.

Being a Genius Is Hard Work

1 Lang Lang began playing the piano in his native China at the age of three, an age when most children are **hardly** able to hold a spoon. At age five, he won his first competition. At
5 thirteen, he was giving concerts in Beijing's main concert hall, earning the **admiration** of millions. Today, the adult Lang Lang is a superstar of classical piano. His popularity has motivated a new generation of Chinese
10 children. There is even an expression to describe the sudden increase in the number of young Chinese children taking piano lessons: the "Lang Lang effect." But will they succeed? What does it take to become the next Lang
15 Lang? Is it the luck of being born a genius or simple hard work?

Exceptional talent appears in a very small number of children at an early age. Frequently these prodigies **exhibit** talent in music and
20 math. They might also show special abilities in language and the sciences or art. Kim Ung-Yong of South Korea, for example, spoke four languages and could solve complex mathematical problems at age four. Akrit
25 Jaswal of India became interested in medicine while still a **toddler**. He performed his first operation at age seven and is now **striving** to find a cure for cancer.

30 Despite the early potential of these children, it is difficult to know what will happen when they grow up. We still do not know exactly what genius really is, though many experts have tried to define it. The most famous
35 predictor of intelligence is the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test. It was developed by the

French psychologist Alfred Binet in the early twentieth century. However, many experts now **confirm** that this type of intelligence test only tells one side of the story. Most people
40 who score exceptionally high on intelligence tests as children never do anything particularly exceptional with their lives. This does not mean that intelligence testing is useless. It simply means that genius is still not very well
45 understood. Clearly, however, it involves much more than intelligence.

Tests that focus on creativity and problem solving skills have since been developed. On these kinds of tests, for example, children
50 might be asked to think of different ways to get from one side of the city to another. The children who score the highest can come up with forty or more possibilities in five minutes. Using helium balloons¹ to fly above the traffic
55 is just one example of the creative solutions children think of.

Experts are also looking at the importance of motivation and work in the development
60 of genius. According to the writer Malcolm Gladwell, many of the world's most successful people became great because they spent 10,000 hours or more acquiring and
65 developing their skills. Microsoft founder Bill Gates, for example, spent many of his high school years programming on one of the first commercially available computers. The Beatles
70 spent their early years playing music anywhere they could. At one point they were playing seven nights a week for eight hours at a time in nightclubs in Germany. By the time they

¹ helium balloons: balloons filled with helium, which is lighter than air

became successful, they had played together an astonishing 1,200 times.

75 Gladwell does not **minimize the importance of natural talent** to the success of the Beatles and Bill Gates of the world. However, he argues that **the kids who will one day become superstars are almost always individuals with natural gifts who are also willing to work exceptionally, even obsessively, hard.**

80 Environment may also play a role. Psychologist and researcher Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi says that many **world-class² thinkers and artists** grew up with either **great adversity** or great privilege. He suggests that
85 in the first case, the children learn to focus their attention in order to escape their difficult

lives. And in the second case, the children **have access to information and resources that are not available to the average person.** In
90 both cases, the children start with talent. They then add the hard work necessary to become great economists, artists, or scientists.

The good news is that **genius can appear at any time in life.** Einstein is famous for failing algebra³ long before he became a world-class scientist. The painter Grandma Moses completed her first painting when she was in her **seventies.** The lesson for parents is that **the importance of hard work should never be minimized.** For any child to reach his or her potential, **hard work is at least as important as natural talent.**

² world-class: among the best in the world

³ algebra: a type of mathematics that uses letters and other signs to represent numbers

Vocabulary Check

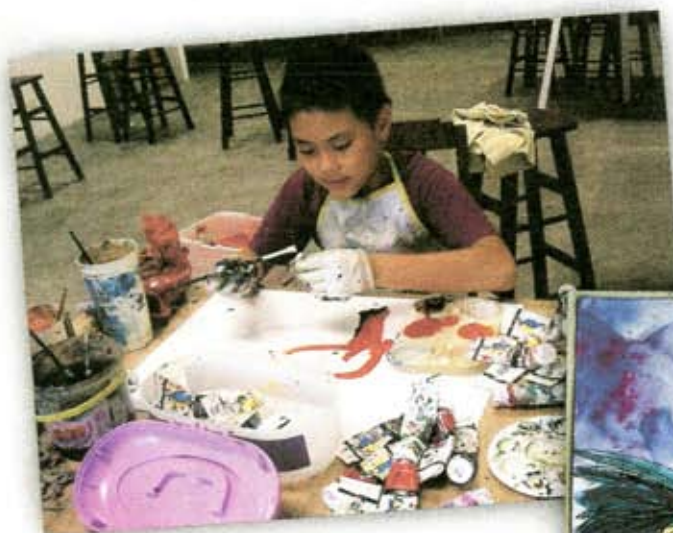
A. Complete the paragraphs with the boldfaced words from the reading. Use the correct form of the word.

Many children have the possibility, or potential to become exceptional at something. However, their parents do not always have the money to send their children to good schools or pay for special lessons. In fact, very few children (1) _____ the educational and cultural resources that could help them develop their unique abilities. As a result, many children who (2) _____, or show, natural talent at a young age—when they are (3) _____—don't have the chance to (4) _____ the skills they need to become successful adults.

Some experts do not think that natural ability is the most important thing for success. They (5) _____ its importance; that is, they believe that no one is born a genius. Instead, they believe that "geniuses" are simply people who work much harder than others. These hardworking

(continued on next page)

Through the Eyes of Love



PREPARE TO READ

A. Look at the words in the list. Write the number(s) next to each word to show what you know. You may be able to write more than one number next to some of the words. You will study all of these words in this chapter.

1. I can use the word in a sentence.
2. I know one meaning of the word.
3. I know more than one meaning of the word.
4. I know how to pronounce the word.

B. Work with a partner. Look at the pictures. Ask and answer the questions. If you don't know a word in English, ask your partner or look in your dictionary. Then write your new words on page 233.

1. Who do you think the boy is? How old is he? What special skill does he have?
2. Do you know what autism is? If so, explain it to your partner.

- _____ accelerate
- _____ adopt
- _____ affection
- _____ anticipate
- _____ curriculum
- _____ disorder
- _____ extraordinary
- _____ hyperactive
- _____ livelihood
- _____ pace
- _____ repetitive
- _____ scenery
- _____ strain

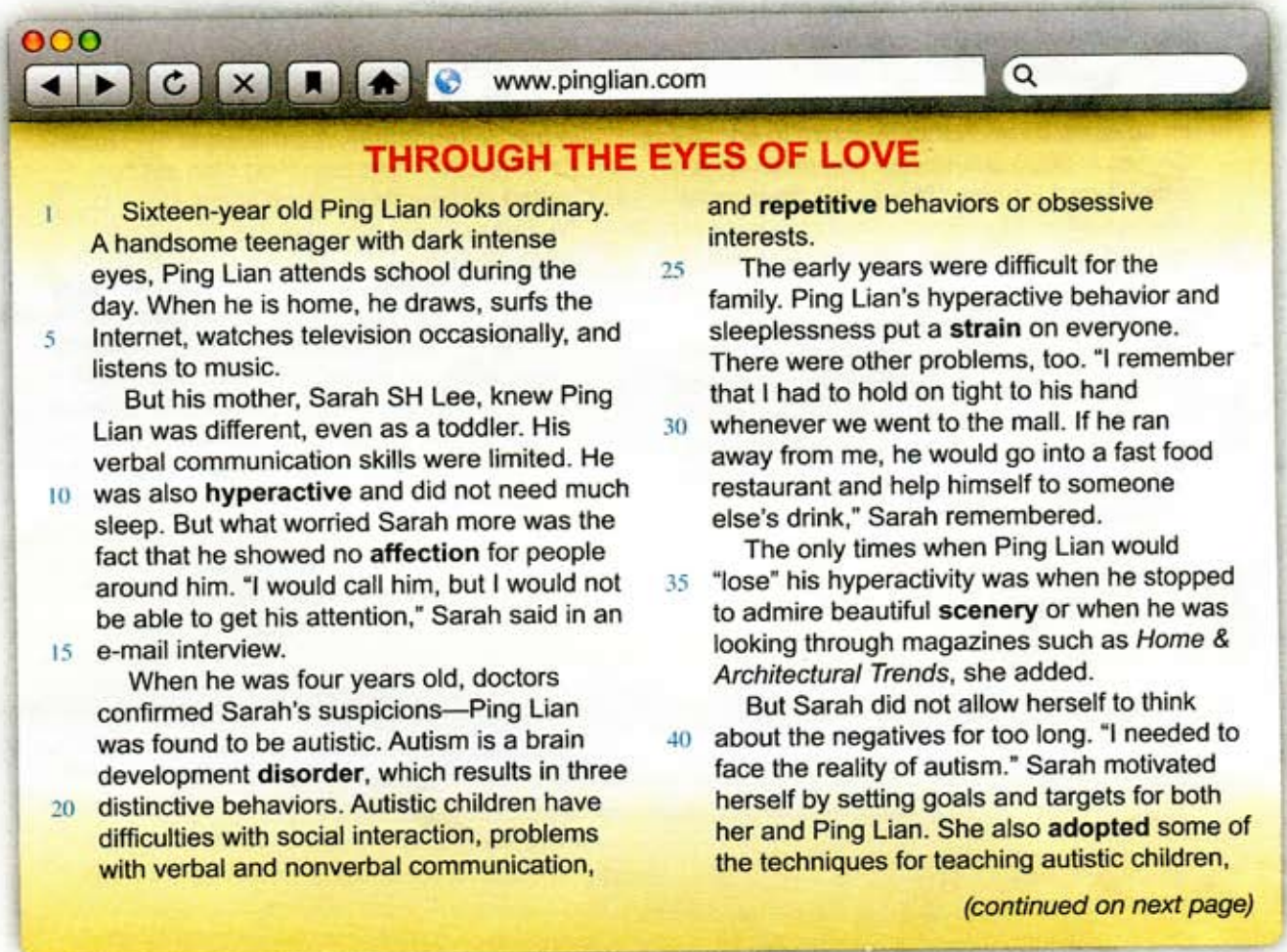
C. Read the questions. Then scan the Web page excerpt "Through the Eyes of Love" and write the answers.

1. What is autism? _____
2. How old was Ping Lian when he was diagnosed with autism? _____
3. What methods did Ping Lian's mother use to teach her son?

4. When did Ping Lian's interest in art begin? _____
5. Where has Ping Lian exhibited his artwork? _____
6. Who is Dr. Treffert? _____

▶ READ

Read "Through the Eyes of Love." Check your answers from Exercise C.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "www.pinglian.com". The page content is titled "THROUGH THE EYES OF LOVE" in red. The text is divided into two columns. The left column contains paragraphs 1 through 20, and the right column contains paragraphs 25 through 40. The text describes Ping Lian's life, his mother Sarah's experiences, and his diagnosis of autism. The article ends with "(continued on next page)".

THROUGH THE EYES OF LOVE

1 Sixteen-year old Ping Lian looks ordinary. A handsome teenager with dark intense eyes, Ping Lian attends school during the day. When he is home, he draws, surfs the Internet, watches television occasionally, and listens to music.

5 But his mother, Sarah SH Lee, knew Ping Lian was different, even as a toddler. His verbal communication skills were limited. He was also **hyperactive** and did not need much sleep. But what worried Sarah more was the fact that he showed no **affection** for people around him. "I would call him, but I would not be able to get his attention," Sarah said in an e-mail interview.

15 When he was four years old, doctors confirmed Sarah's suspicions—Ping Lian was found to be autistic. Autism is a brain development **disorder**, which results in three distinctive behaviors. Autistic children have difficulties with social interaction, problems with verbal and nonverbal communication, and **repetitive** behaviors or obsessive interests.

25 The early years were difficult for the family. Ping Lian's hyperactive behavior and sleeplessness put a **strain** on everyone. There were other problems, too. "I remember that I had to hold on tight to his hand whenever we went to the mall. If he ran away from me, he would go into a fast food restaurant and help himself to someone else's drink," Sarah remembered.

30 The only times when Ping Lian would "lose" his hyperactivity was when he stopped to admire beautiful **scenery** or when he was looking through magazines such as *Home & Architectural Trends*, she added.

35 But Sarah did not allow herself to think about the negatives for too long. "I needed to face the reality of autism." Sarah motivated herself by setting goals and targets for both her and Ping Lian. She also **adopted** some of the techniques for teaching autistic children,

40

(continued on next page)

45 such as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).
The program helps to increase or decrease a
particular behavior, to improve the quality of
a behavior, to stop an old behavior, or teach
50 a new one by breaking down complex tasks
into smaller parts and teaching each one in a
repetitive manner.

Sarah remembers that Ping Lian could
hardly hold a pencil correctly to write, or
use a pair of scissors to cut when he first
55 started. In order to strengthen and develop
his fine motor skills,¹ his **curriculum** included
tracing² and coloring activities.

At the age of eight in mid-2002, Ping Lian
suddenly acquired an obsession for art.
60 Sarah remembers it well: "One day, after he
had finished eating an ice-cream cone, he
just started drawing the pictures printed on
the ice-cream wrapper," she said.

From that moment on Ping Lian's progress
65 in drawing and painting **accelerated at**
an amazing **pace**. Sarah sent him to art
classes in 2003 and started planning art as
a **livelihood** for him. "The art teachers were
nervous when I told them of my plan but I
70 assured them that I was willing to wait five,
ten, or even twenty years," she says. But
to her surprise, Ping Lian's art works were
quickly recognized. By September 2004, he
75 In November 2004, one of his watercolors³
sold for RM 100,000.⁴

Although Sarah's dream of Ping Lian
becoming an artist has become a reality, she
has not stopped striving to do better. Her
80 research on autism and art on the Internet led
her to learn about the savant syndrome⁵ and
world-famous researcher on the subject, Dr.
Darold A. Treffert. She decided to get in touch
with Dr. Treffert, who is based in the United
85 States.

Dr. Treffert recognized Ping Lian as a
savant in September 2004. Dr. Treffert
said the artwork stands on its own and
demonstrates a remarkable ability. "Ping
90 Lian's work does show **extraordinary**
artistic talent in and of itself.⁶ But when
seen in contrast to his limitations in other
areas, his artistic talent becomes even more
exceptional," Dr. Treffert said in an e-mail
95 interview.

Today, Ping Lian is recognized worldwide
as a gifted artist. He has had art exhibitions
in the United States, Australia and the United
Kingdom. And although Ping Lian still has
100 limited communication and social skills, Dr.
Treffert believes his savant ability will help
him in the future. Ping Lian's mother also
reports that his behavior and social skills are
much better. He is an affectionate person
105 who is no longer hyperactive, and he often
helps his mother around the house. She
anticipates that this trend will continue.

¹ **fine motor skills:** the ability to use one's hands to do complicated and delicate things

² **trace:** to copy a drawing by putting a piece of paper over it and drawing the lines you see through the paper

³ **watercolor:** a picture painted with paint mixed with water

⁴ **RM 100,000:** Malaysian Ringgit (RM 100,00 = about \$30,000).

⁵ **savant syndrome:** a rare condition in which people with developmental disorders (including autism spectrum disorders) have one or more areas of expertise, ability, or brilliance that are in contrast with their other limitations

⁶ **in and of itself:** considered alone

Vocabulary Check

Read the statements from the reading. Write *T* (true) or *F* (false). Then correct the false statements to make them true. The boldfaced words are the target words.

- _____ 1. When a car **accelerates**, it slows down.
- _____ 2. A **repetitive** action is one that is repeated many times.
- _____ 3. If you have a physical **disorder**, you are healthy.
- _____ 4. People show **affection** by hugging each other.
- _____ 5. People under a lot of **strain** can relax easily.
- _____ 6. **Hyperactive** toddlers are calm and easy to take care of.
- _____ 7. When something is a part of the **curriculum**, it is taught.
- _____ 8. If you want to enjoy the **scenery** when you travel, it is best to travel by plane.
- _____ 9. A chef's **livelihood** is cooking.
- _____ 10. If you **anticipate** something, you are not surprised when it happens.
- _____ 11. Toddlers and adults naturally walk at the same **pace**.
- _____ 12. When you **adopt** a new method, you reject it.
- _____ 13. **Extraordinary** events are quite common.



READ AGAIN

Read "Through the Eyes of Love" again and complete the comprehension exercises on the next page. As you work, keep the reading goal in mind.



READING GOAL: To write a summary of Ping Lian's life

Comprehension Check

A. Check (✓) the statements that are true according to the reading.

- 1. Ping Lian's mother spotted his artistic talent when he was a toddler.
- 2. Dr. Treffert diagnosed Ping Lian with autism.
- 3. Ping Lian's mother was surprised at her son's talent.
- 4. It is rare for people with autism to be as talented as Ping Lian.
- 5. Dr. Treffert believes that Ping Lian is talented because he is autistic.
- 6. There is a good chance that Ping Lian's communicative and social skills will improve in the future.

B. Take notes about the most significant facts and events in Ping Lian's life on the timeline.

1-4 years old 2002 2003 2004 today

Below the timeline, there are five yellow boxes for taking notes:

- Box 1: Connected to the timeline between 1-4 years old and 2002.
- Box 2: Connected to the timeline between 2002 and 2003.
- Box 3: Connected to the timeline between 2003 and 2004.
- Box 4: Connected to the timeline between 2004 and today.
- Box 5: Positioned below the timeline, between 2002 and 2003.
- Box 6: Positioned below the timeline, between 2003 and 2004.

C. Using the information from the timeline, write a one-paragraph summary of Ping Lian's life on a separate sheet of paper. Do not look back at the text.

D. Work with a partner. Compare your summaries. Did you include similar information? Are any of your sentences too close to the sentences in the text? If so, change them.

DISCUSS

Work in small groups. Ask and answer the questions.

1. In what ways might autism have contributed to the development of Ping Lian's talent as an artist? In what ways might it have interfered with the development of his talent?
2. What are some other extraordinary skills or talents that autistic savants have? In what ways might autism contribute to the development of these skills or talents?
3. If you could choose to be exceptionally talented in one area such as music, art, math, etc., which area would you choose? Why?

VOCABULARY SKILL BUILDING

Vocabulary Skill: Prefixes *extra-*, *hyper-*, *mini-*, *micro-*, *uni-*, *mono-*

Many prefixes in English come from Latin and Greek. It is common for there to be two prefixes with similar meanings, one derived from Latin, and the other from Greek.

Prefix	Derivation and meaning	Example
<i>extra-</i>	Latin: outside of; beyond	<i>extraordinary</i> = outside of what is ordinary; beyond ordinary
<i>hyper-</i>	Greek: over; above; excessive	<i>hyperactive</i> = excessively active; overly active
<i>mini-</i>	Latin: small	<i>minimize</i> = to make something seem smaller or less important
<i>micro-</i>	Greek: small	<i>micromanage</i> = to manage even the smallest details of something
<i>uni-</i>	Latin: one	<i>unique</i> = being the only one of its kind
<i>mono-</i>	Greek: one	<i>monotone</i> = a series of sounds all repeated in one tone, without variation

Complete the sentences. Add prefixes from the chart on page 221 to the words in the list to form new words. If you are not sure of a word, look in a dictionary.

biologist curricular lingual sex skirt tension

1. My son is an excellent student. In addition to his schoolwork, he is involved in many _____ activities including tennis and music lessons.
2. In this building, all of the restrooms are _____. There are no restrooms specifically for men or women. Men and women use the same restrooms.
3. He needs to take medicine to control his high blood pressure. He suffers from _____.
4. In the 1960s, the _____—a skirt that was high above the knee—was fashionable.
5. A _____ studies very small living things such as viruses and bacteria.
6. People who are _____ speak only one language.