Batting the Ball

Betsy went to a new school at the beginning of third grade. At recess, Betsy wanted to play baseball. The teacher told Betsy that she could not play with a hard baseball, because someone might get hurt. The playground rule was that only soft balls were allowed.

Betsy laughed. “But I am a baseball player,” she said. Betsy did not understand why she could only play with a soft ball.

A few days later, another third-grader brought a hard baseball to school. Betsy was eager to show off her baseball skills. She loved the feel of the bat as it hit the hard ball.

When it was Betsy’s turn to bat, she stepped up to home plate. The pitcher threw the ball, and it curved around. The ball hit Betsy in the shoulder and she fell to the ground.

“Ouch!” Betsy cried. The teacher ran over to see what had happened. Betsy stood up, rubbing her shoulder. “I think we should use a soft ball,” she said to the teacher.

“What good thinking!” the teacher said, replacing the baseball with a soft ball.
Largest U.S. Cities

Millions of people in the United States live in cities. The number of people who live in a city is called its population.

The U.S. city with the most people living in it is New York City. Los Angeles, California, comes in second. Chicago, Illinois, is the third largest city with Houston, Texas, closely following. New York City, however, has almost as many people as Los Angeles, Chicago, and Houston put together!

### Strategy
What are two important ideas in the text?

### Skill
Look at the bar graph. What facts can you learn from the graph?
Looking at rocks is fun and interesting. Some rocks look the same all over. They are made of one thing. However, most rocks do not look the same all over. Some have different colors. Some have sparkles. Others have shiny spots. The colors and sparkles and shine come from the different materials mixed together in the rock.

If you like looking at rocks, you can get a job working with rocks when you grow up. Some scientists look at rocks to find out about people from long ago. Other scientists look at rocks to find oil. Some rock scientists help builders make buildings safe. Others try to predict when an earthquake will happen or a volcano will erupt.

Rocks can tell us many things. Take a look!
Swim!

Exercise is important for good health. When people do not exercise, their muscles become soft and weak.

Swimming is one of the best ways to exercise. When swimming, you must move against the water. This makes muscles stronger. It takes more energy to move through water than it does through air. So swimming helps people lose fat. All this also helps your heart get and stay strong.

Many people get hurt playing soccer, football, or basketball. Not in swimming! It’s one of the safest ways to exercise.

Swimming is also a great way to have fun while you exercise. You can cool off on a hot summer day and play water games with your friends. Swimming races are an exciting way to beat the heat.

If you do not know how to swim, you should learn how—now!
Eagles are large birds of prey that are members of the falcon family. Like all birds of prey, eagles have very large hooked beaks, strong legs, and powerful talons or claws. Another advantage that eagles have is their keen eyesight. Eagles can spot their prey from very long distances because they have large pupils.

Eagles are different from many other birds of prey. They are larger, have a more powerful build, and have heavier heads and bills. Most eagles are larger than any other birds of prey apart from vultures.

Eagles build their nests in tall trees or on high cliffs so that their young chicks are protected from other animals. In recent years, eagles have fallen prey to their environment. Many eagles have moved away from the heavily populated areas in the United States or disappeared entirely because of human expansion.