



Henry Flagler Printable Reading Comprehension

Grade Level: 5 | Word Count: 313 | Lexile 1000

Early Life

Henry Morrison Flagler was born on January 2, 1830, in Hopewell, New York. He grew up in a modest family and left school at age 14 to work. His first job was at a grain store, where he learned the basics of business. This early experience shaped his future success.

Business Ventures

Flagler moved to Ohio as a young man and worked in the salt and grain industry. Later, he partnered with John D. Rockefeller to start the Standard Oil Company in 1870. This company became the largest oil business in the United States, and Flagler became very wealthy.

Building Florida

In the 1880s, Flagler visited Florida and saw its potential for tourism. At the time, Florida was mostly undeveloped, with poor transportation. Flagler decided to change that. He built luxury hotels and improved the state's infrastructure. Most importantly, he expanded the Florida East Coast Railway, connecting cities along the Atlantic coast.

Impact and Legacy

Flagler's work transformed Florida. Cities like Palm Beach, Miami, and Key West grew because of his vision. He made it possible for visitors and settlers to travel easily. Henry Flagler died on May 20, 1913, in Palm Beach, Florida. Today, he is remembered as a founder of modern Florida.

1. Which sentence best explains why Flagler is called a founder of modern Florida?

- a) He was born in New York.
- b) He helped develop cities and transportation in Florida.
- c) He worked in the grain and salt industry.
- d) He started Standard Oil Company.

2. Based on the passage, what problem did Flagler see in Florida during the 1880s?

- a) There were too many visitors.
- b) The state lacked transportation and development.
- c) The state had no natural resources.
- d) The hotels were too expensive.

3. Which statement best shows how Flagler's early life influenced his success?

- a) He left school at age 14 to work at a grain store.
- b) He became wealthy after partnering with Rockefeller.
- c) He built hotels in Florida.
- d) He expanded the Florida East Coast Railway.

4. How did Flagler's projects change Florida's economy and population?

- a) They caused people to leave Florida.
- b) They made Florida poorer.
- c) They encouraged tourism and city growth.
- d) They focused on farming and agriculture.

5. Which of these best describes the author's purpose in writing this passage?

- a) To entertain readers with stories about early trains
- b) To explain why Florida became an important tourist state
- c) To compare Florida and New York during the 1800s
- d) To persuade people to invest in railroads

6. If Flagler had not visited Florida in the 1880s, what might have happened?

- a) Florida might have stayed undeveloped for a longer time.
- b) Standard Oil would have gone out of business.
- c) Palm Beach and Miami would have become farming towns.
- d) The state would have had better hotels.

7. Which of these titles best captures the main idea of the passage?

- a) "Florida Before Tourism"
- b) "Henry Flagler: The Builder of Modern Florida"
- c) "John D. Rockefeller and His Partners"
- d) "The History of American Railroads"

Answer Key

1. **b)** He helped develop cities and transportation in Florida.
2. **b)** The state lacked transportation and development.
3. **a)** He left school at age 14 to work at a grain store.
4. **c)** They encouraged tourism and city growth.
5. **b)** To explain why Florida became an important tourist state
6. **a)** Florida might have stayed undeveloped for a longer time.
7. **b)** “Henry Flagler: The Builder of Modern Florida”