

## Grade 4 Informational

### All About Zippers

Whitcomb L. Judson lived in Chicago over one hundred years ago. He loved machines and created many things. He invented a new kind of streetcar that ran on an underground track. The zipper was his most famous invention.

It all started with Whitcomb's friend, who had a sore back. At the time, most shoes had buttons or "hooks and eyes" that closed them. Either way, it took two hands. This made it difficult for people like Whitcomb's friend. He found it hard to bend over and fasten his shoes.

Whitcomb wanted to help his friend. In 1893, he came up with an idea to fasten shoes by sliding a small tab up and down. It would let people close their shoes with just one hand. It took him a few weeks to build a model. He called his new invention a "clasp locker." It looked like two chains with hooks and eyes and a sliding piece that joined the two chains together.

That same year, the World's Fair was held in Chicago. Whitcomb had a small table showing the clasp locker. Most people had no interest in it. There were so many other things to see at the fair. Whitcomb sold just twenty clasp lockers at the fair to post-office workers. They used them on their mail bags. Part of the problem was that his new invention broke easily. Many people thought buttons were better. Others couldn't see how to make the clasp locker work.

Whitcomb still hoped his invention would catch on. He even started a company to make the new invention. One of his workers had ideas for making the clasp locker better. His name was Gideon Sundback. After Whitcomb died, Gideon made many changes to the invention. It looked similar to the zippers we use today.

In 1923, the BFGoodrich Company decided to sell rain boots using Gideon's new clasp lockers. At last, they became popular. One of the Goodrich workers noticed that the clasp lockers made a "zip" sound when they were opened and closed. This gave the clasp locker a new name. Soon, "zippers" were being used everywhere.

## Grade 4 Narrative

### Walking on the Moon

When I was in third grade, I got to take a trip to the moon. I remember the day like it was yesterday. It was one of the strangest experiences I'd ever had.

It all started when Miss Fritz, our third grade science teacher, was showing a video about the solar system and different planets. Half way through the video, I noticed a sparkling metal disc, about the size of a quarter, lying on the floor. I kept trying to pay attention to the video, but found myself reaching over to pick up the shiny disc that was next to my desk.

As soon as I touched the metal disc, something strange happened. I wasn't in the classroom anymore. I was hovering in the air, way above the school. I could see the whole town, or rather the rooftops of the whole town. I was a little nervous, but also pretty excited. What was happening? How could I be floating?

It was then I remembered the metal disc I'd picked up from the floor earlier. Did it have something to do with the strange things that were happening to me right now? I opened my palm and looked closely at the disc. On the disc were the words:

*"Floating through the air, like a helium filled balloon, your travels will not stop, until you reach the moon."*

The next thing I knew, I was soaring through space, dodging satellites and asteroids. Oddly enough, I wasn't cold and I was able to breathe just fine. Before I knew it, I was standing on the moon. It was amazing! It looked very different than Earth. No trees, water, or houses. There wasn't even any wind.

For each step I took I would bounce way up into the air. Every step I took left a huge footprint in the dust. I had to be careful and make sure I didn't jump into a crater because I wasn't sure if I'd be able to get out. Sometimes I couldn't even see the bottom. I was bounding over to something in the distance that looked very out of place. When I got there, I realized it was a flag. On the flag were the words:

*"To go to Earth, close your eyes and think of what you've learned. You will find in no time at all, you will be returned."*

I wasn't sure I wanted to go back just yet, but I knew it might get dark soon and I didn't want to be on the moon by myself in the dark. I decided to close my eyes and think of the weather and other characteristics of the moon I'd learned that day.

When I opened my eyes I was sitting in my desk in my science classroom. Miss Fritz was turning on the lights because the video was over. I sat there wondering about what just

happened. I opened my hand to look at the metal disc, but it was gone! Did I really take a trip to the moon or was it just a dream?