

## Oral Reading Test

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- ▶ At first, it had seemed like the big day would never arrive. When it was first announced last September, the Spring Science Fair seemed so far off that counting the number of months leading up to it seemed pointless.

The weeks had melted away. Dozens of Monday mornings had come and gone. Soccer practices had given way to basketball drills. The glaring summer sun had softened behind fall leaves. The park, blanketed in snow just weeks ago, was now a huge, soggy space. Mud, leaves, and tiny blades of fresh grass had made a mess of corridors and entranceways.

Now the day was so near that it was strange to think of how much time had passed. After tomorrow, the fair would be over. The science lab, recently overflowing with bubbling test tubes and botched experiments, would seem deserted. The students would be busy elsewhere, when just last month they were cramming into the library to research last-minute ideas. But today, science projects were still number one on everyone's mind. For a few lucky students, tomorrow was going to be a day to remember. The winners would have their picture taken for the newspaper, and get to take home trophies.

Crazy as it sounds, I had been thinking and planning since the fall. I'd gone back and forth between a couple of options, and finally decided on using salt and sugar to grow crystals. It was a good thing too. Because I'd started early, I had a couple of large clusters. I used colors to tell the difference between the salt and sugar crystals. Mom had a couple of quartz crystals that I would use to show how different minerals form crystals that look similar. Tonight, I would add the finishing touches on my poster and hope for the best tomorrow.