From Tree to Bottle

Grade 3 reading · sequencing events

Name: Date: Score: / 12



From Tree to Bottle

1 Maple syrup starts in late winter, when the days have begun to warm up but the nights are still freezing cold. That change from frozen to thawed and back again is what makes the sap move inside the tree.

2 **First**, a small hole is drilled into the trunk of a sugar maple. A metal spout is tapped into the hole and a bucket is hung underneath it. Clear sap begins to drip into the bucket almost at once.

3 The sap in that bucket does not taste like syrup at all. It is mostly water, with only a little sugar in it. It takes about forty litres of sap to make one litre of syrup.

4 **Next**, the sap is carried to the sugar shack and poured into a long shallow pan over a fire. It boils for hours. Steam pours out through the roof, and the liquid in the pan slowly turns darker and thicker.

5 **Last**, when the syrup is thick enough, it is strained and poured into bottles. One bottle on a breakfast table took a whole winter, a whole tree, and a very long fire.

Number these steps from 1 to 5 in the order they happen. The passage tells you the order.

- [ ] The syrup is strained and poured into bottles.
- [ ] A small hole is drilled into the trunk of a sugar maple.
- [ ] The sap boils for hours in a long shallow pan.
- [ ] A bucket is hung underneath the metal spout.
- [ ] Clear sap drips into the bucket.

Now answer the questions.

1. Why do the nights have to be freezing and the days warm? *(paragraph 1)*

2. Which word in paragraph 2 tells you that step comes first?

3. Which **two** words signal the order in paragraphs 4 and 5?

4. Why does the sap have to be boiled? *(paragraphs 3 and 4)*

5. About how much sap makes one litre of syrup? Circle one letter.

   a about four litres
   b about fourteen litres
   c about forty litres
   d about four hundred litres

6. What would happen if someone skipped the boiling step?

7. Write the whole process in your own words. Use the words **First**, **Next**, **Then** and **Last**.

From Tree to Bottle — Answer Key

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Ordering the steps

1. The syrup is strained and poured into bottles. — **5**
2. A small hole is drilled into the trunk of a sugar maple. — **1**
3. The sap boils for hours in a long shallow pan. — **4**
4. A bucket is hung underneath the metal spout. — **2**
5. Clear sap drips into the bucket. — **3**

Questions

1. Why do the nights have to be freezing and the days warm? **Because that change from frozen to thawed and back again is what makes the sap move inside the tree.**
2. Which word in paragraph 2 tells you this step comes first? **“First”**
3. Which two words signal order in paragraphs 4 and 5? **“Next” and “Last”**
4. Why does the sap have to be boiled? **Because it is mostly water. Boiling drives the water off as steam, which leaves the liquid thicker, darker and sweeter.**
5. About how much sap makes one litre of syrup? **c — about forty litres**
6. What would happen if someone skipped the boiling? **They would be left with thin, watery sap that is barely sweet. It would not be syrup, because nothing had removed the water.**
7. The steps in your own words. **Answers vary.** A full answer uses all four order words and keeps the steps in the right sequence: drill and tap the tree, collect the sap, boil it, bottle it.

> Watch for students who number the steps by where the sentences appear on the page rather than by what the passage says. The five events are listed out of order on purpose, and the bottling step is printed first. A child who writes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 straight down the column has ordered the list, not the process.