

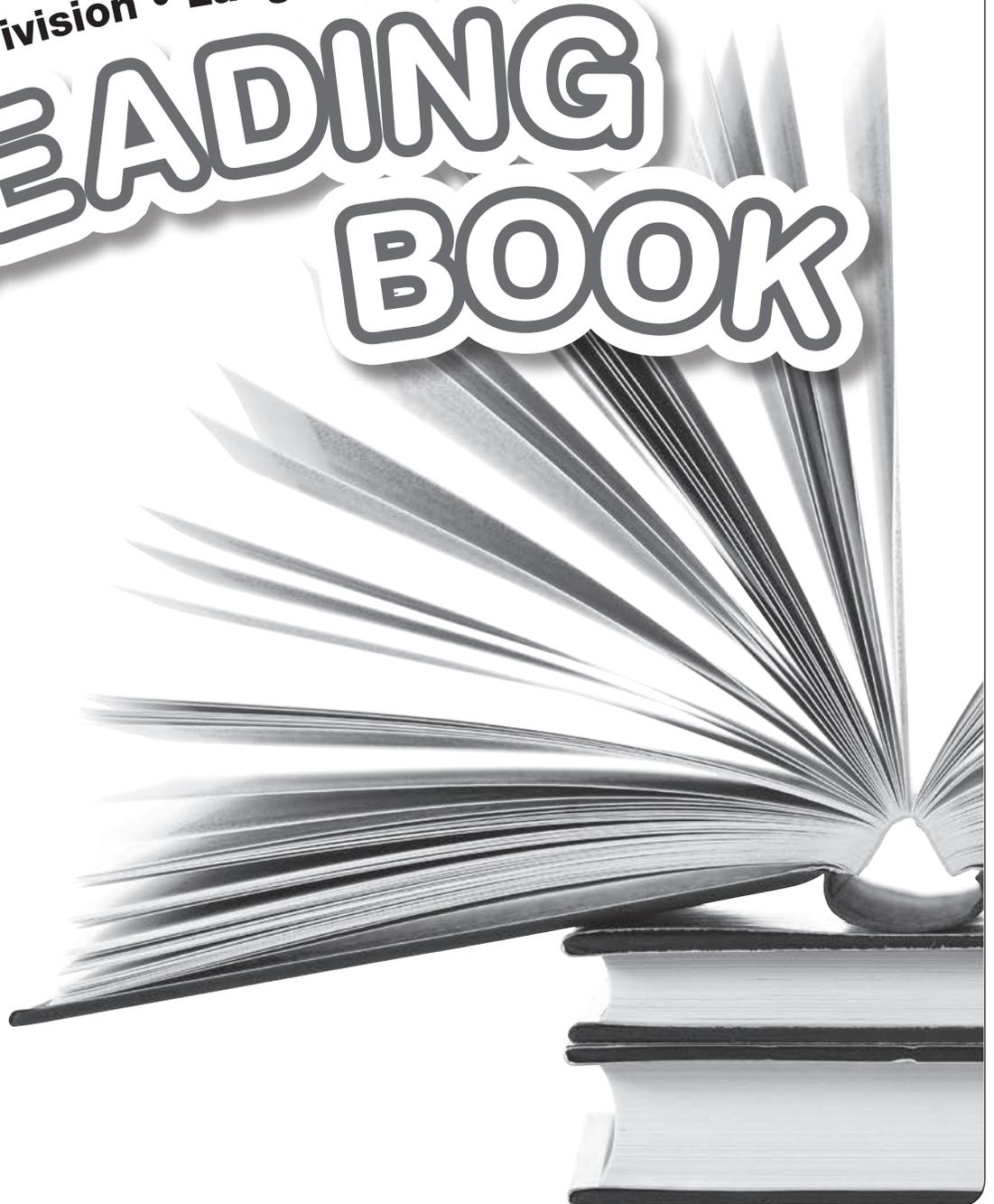
# Released Reading Selections, 2015

Grade

# 6

Junior Division • Language

# READING BOOK



Education Quality and  
Accountability Office



## Joseph-Armand Bombardier— Dreamer and Inventor



April 16, 1907, Valcourt, in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, Canada: Joseph-Armand Bombardier is born. No one in this peaceful farming village anticipates the newborn's unusual destiny.

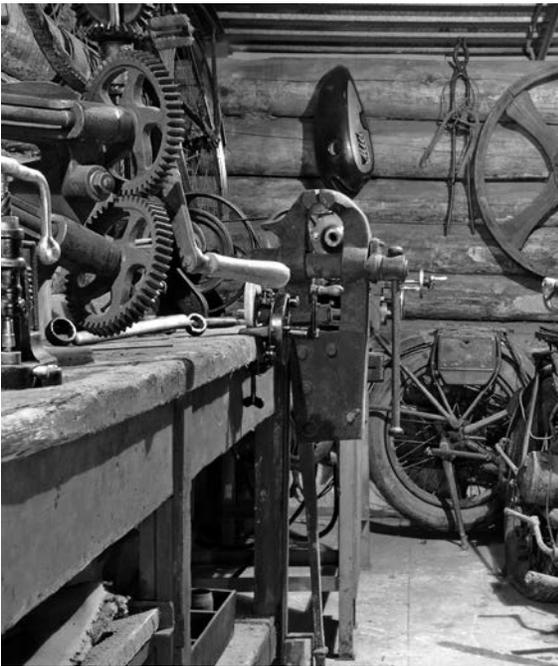
1

As a boy, Joseph-Armand shows remarkable curiosity about everything mechanical, taking apart and reassembling a variety of machines. At a mere 13 years old, he manufactures one of his first mechanical toys—a miniature train engine driven by a clock mechanism.

2

To the immense pleasure of his brothers, sisters and friends, Joseph-Armand's imagination soon gives life to other mobile toys, such as tractors and boats. He builds a steam engine out of old sewing-machine parts and, with permission from his aunt, mounts it on her spinning wheel. To his great joy, the wheel spins faster and faster.

3



To his father's dismay, Joseph-Armand takes great pleasure in dismantling and reassembling the family car's motor. As a result, his father gives him an old, irreparable Model T Ford motor. With the help of his brother, Leopold, the teenager nevertheless fixes the motor and uses it in a vehicle of his own design. On New Year's Eve, his family watches in astonishment as a strange sled propelled by the old Ford motor emerges from his workshop. Sitting in front, Leopold steers the machine while Joseph-Armand, standing at the back, operates the motor, which turns a propeller manufactured by the young inventor himself. At 15 years old, he has just created his first snow vehicle.

4

In 1926, at the age of 19, he opens his own garage. His remarkable ability to solve any mechanical problem earns him an outstanding reputation throughout the region. His success allows him to concentrate on his dream of designing a motorized vehicle light enough to travel on snow. Snow has been a concern throughout his youth because of the way it isolates Quebec villages in winter. 5

For 10 years, he works on the project, often late at night. Year after year, he develops a variety of prototypes. In the winter of 1934, Bombardier's two-year-old son dies because the family is unable to get him to the hospital for treatment. Joseph-Armand increases his efforts, and, in 1935, he finally assembles a vehicle using a sprocket wheel/track system—at long last, the solution for snow travel! 6

The first seven snowmobiles emerge from a new factory in the winter of 1936–1937. They are given the name B7—“B” for Bombardier and “7” for the number of passengers they can carry. They are well received by customers, but the inventor is always seeking ways to improve his creation. In 1940, unable to keep up with demand, the company builds a more modern plant with a production capacity of 200 vehicles per year. 7

Throughout 1941, Joseph-Armand perfects a new snowmobile called the B12, which becomes very popular with a range of customers. It is used for ambulance and rescue services, for installing and maintaining electricity and telephone lines, and on mining sites. An expanded version of the B12 can seat up to 25 schoolchildren, meeting a need for winter student transport. Known as the school snowmobile, it is sold in Quebec and Ontario. 8



The future seems certain, but 1948–1949 brings new challenges for the company. The winter snowfall is very light, and the Quebec government begins clearing snow from country roads. In one year, sales fall nearly \$1 million. 9

A disaster? Joseph-Armand Bombardier takes these changes as a challenge and creates new machines to tackle all sorts of terrain, from snow to swamps. He develops new industrial vehicles equipped with an interchangeable system of wheels and skis, and in 1953 the Muskeg is launched. It is greatly successful and is used in the Alps to carry skiers as well as in the Sahara Desert to clear roads. 10

The success he has enjoyed and the use of lighter motors allow the inventor to return to his dream of a light, individual vehicle. At the end of 1958, Joseph-Armand creates the prototype for a “miniature” snowmobile. In 1959, he delivers the first Ski-Doo snowmobile to a missionary in remote Northern Ontario. The famous snowmobile will forever change life in northern communities. The name Bombardier will continue to represent the man and his dreams for generations. 11

# Blast-Off

Students read a graphic text titled “Blast-Off” and then answered questions 1–6, which can be found on pages 8–9 of the answer booklet.

Due to copyright restrictions, the text cannot be released to the public over the Internet.

After each assessment, EQAO makes approximately half of the test items (questions) public. This allows EQAO to build a bank of assessment material that can be used in the future. Items that are not published in this booklet are replaced by their description. Test booklets and examples of student answers from the past five years are available at [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com).

Items that are not being published have been described below,  
with a reference to the skill they assessed.

## READING SKILLS

**Explicit:** understanding explicitly stated information and ideas

**Implicit:** understanding implicitly stated information and ideas

**Making Connections:** making connections between information and ideas in a reading selection and personal knowledge and experience

### Short Narrative

4 multiple-choice questions  
(1 Explicit, 2 Implicit, 1 Making Connections)

2 open-response questions  
(1 Implicit, 1 Making Connections)

### Poem

4 multiple-choice questions  
(1 Explicit, 1 Implicit, 2 Making Connections)

2 open-response questions (2 Making Connections)

### Informational Text

4 multiple-choice questions  
(3 Implicit, 1 Making Connections)

2 open-response questions (2 Making Connections)

## WRITING SKILLS

**Content:** identify and support the main idea of a paragraph; make revisions to improve clarity

**Organization:** identify the main idea and supporting details and group them in a paragraph using common organizational patterns

**Grammar:** use parts of speech to communicate clearly

### Short-Writing Prompt

18 lines available for response

### Multiple-Choice Writing

4 multiple-choice questions  
(Content, Organization and Grammar)

## Permissions and Credits

### Section C1: Reading

Adapted from "J. Armand Bombardier," published on the Musée Bombardier Web site, [www.museebombardier.com](http://www.museebombardier.com).

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