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Cover Photo: Independence Day fireworks over the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, July 2008.  
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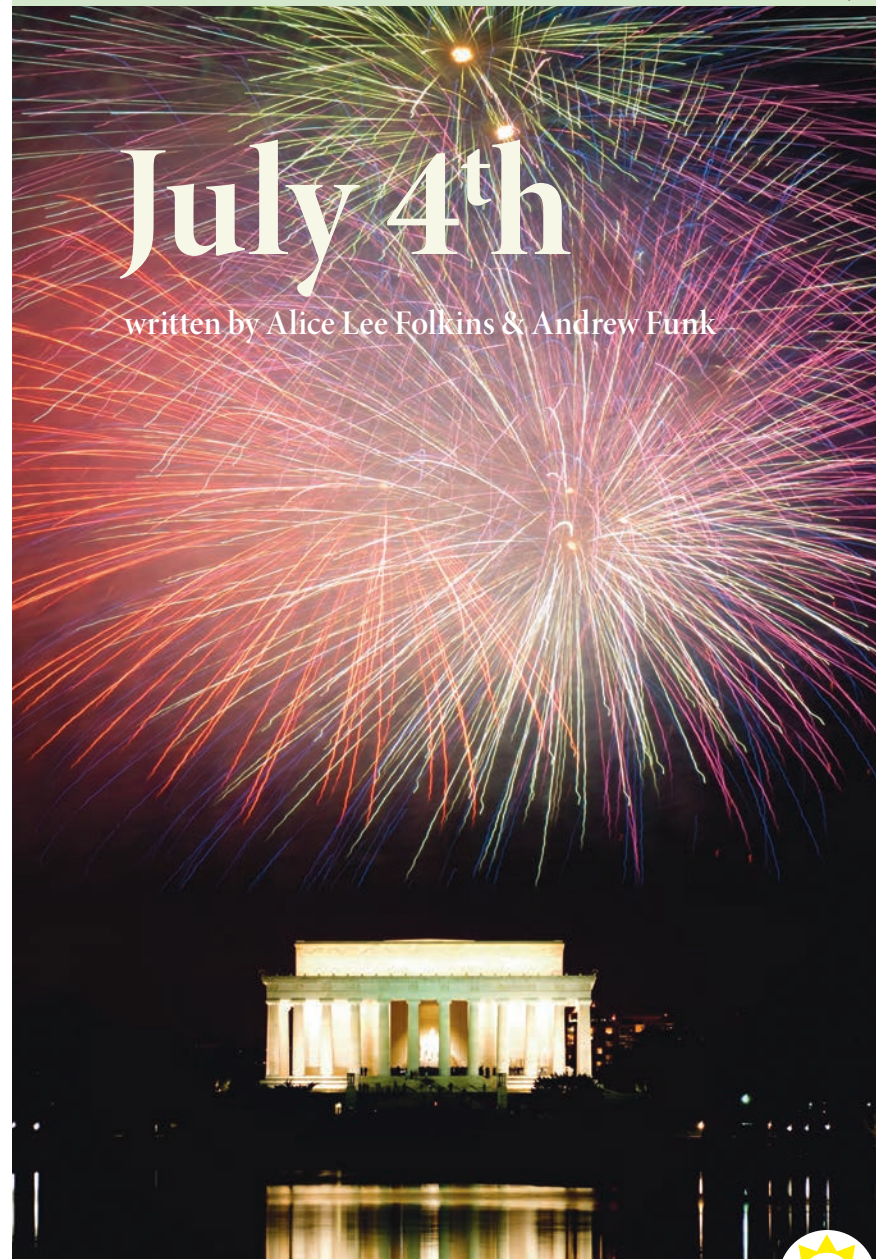
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Level C

Summer Holidays

# July 4<sup>th</sup>

written by Alice Lee Folkins & Andrew Funk



**SummerReads**™ 

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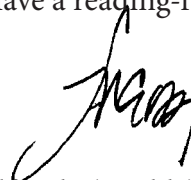
Dear Student,

I am a teacher who has studied how children learn to read well. What I have learned has been used to write SummerReads and programs like QuickReads® and Ready Readers.

The best way to be ready for the new school year is to read every day of the summer. You can choose to read a chapter or a book from SummerReads. But be sure to read it at least three times on the same day. Here's how to use SummerReads:

1. Start by reading it yourself. Mark the words that you don't know.
2. Next, ask someone to read with you. Get that person to help you with any words you don't know. You can even go to the computer to [www.textproject.org](http://www.textproject.org) and hear a recording of the books.
3. Last, you're going to read by yourself to answer the questions at the end of the book. You can go to the computer to find the answers.

Have a reading-filled summer!



Elfrieda (Freddy) Hiebert, Ph.D.

Inventor of the TExT model

**July 4<sup>th</sup>**

Photo: Confetti rains down at a July 4th celebration featuring the Boston Pops Orchestra in Boston, Massachusetts, July 2008. Taken by Patrick Gearhiser. Public domain image by the U.S. Navy.

## Introduction

July 4<sup>th</sup> is the biggest summer holiday for Americans. It is the celebration of our country's birthday, and a great time to enjoy friends and family. Many schools, businesses and government offices are closed on July 4<sup>th</sup> so that people can enjoy the holiday. If July 4<sup>th</sup> is on the weekend, many people also celebrate on the Friday before or the Monday after July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Birthday parties may have games, cakes, and lots of friends and family. Our nation's birthday party is no different. July 4<sup>th</sup> celebrations have lots of games or sports for people to play, and food for people to eat. Some towns have contests like three-legged races. Other towns have cookouts with food that lots of people like to eat. Best of all—everyone gets to go to the party!



## Independence Day



July 4<sup>th</sup> is an important day in American history. It is the day we celebrate our independence from England. Before July 4, 1776, America was one of England's colonies. This meant that American colonists had to follow rules that were written by people living in England. American colonists had to do

what the King of England wanted us to do, even if it wasn't fair or right. If the King of England wanted to charge an extra fee for tea, the American colonists had to pay the extra fee. When we passed the Declaration of Independence, we told England that we wanted to be our own country. On July 4<sup>th</sup> we hold celebrations to remember the day we first became a nation.

One year after the Declaration of Independence, America celebrated its first birthday. Even though America was still fighting a war against England for independence, people celebrated July 4<sup>th</sup> by throwing a birthday party. There were bands playing music, people marching in parades, and people making speeches about the importance of independence. There were even fireworks at the first July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration. The celebration was filled with lots of red, white and blue things; the colors of the American flag. Everyone was able to enjoy the celebrations because stores and businesses were closed. Sounds like the way we celebrate July 4<sup>th</sup> today!

## Fireworks



July 4<sup>th</sup> parties would not be the same without fireworks. First, you hear the squeal as the firework flies into the air. As you try to follow the firework in the dark sky, you hear

boom! And suddenly the night sky is lit up with showers of bright light. Many firework shows last for a long time. These firework shows can have lots of exciting and thrilling fireworks of all different shapes and colors. Picking out just one favorite firework will be hard!

Fireworks have been a part of July 4<sup>th</sup> ever since America's first birthday. Today, in Washington, DC, the firework show lights up all the important places. In a 30-minute firework show, there could be as many as 5000 fireworks. Sometimes, music is played during the firework show. Just like the firework show, the music is also exciting.

In many states, people can set off their own fireworks. Sparklers, and all sorts of lights and sounds are always fun. Try spinning a sparkler around to make different shapes in the air. If you live in a place where people can set off their own fireworks, have fun, but remember to be safe. Always let a parent or another adult be in charge of the fireworks. All you have to do is sit back and enjoy the firework show!

July 4<sup>th</sup>

## Parades and Hot Dogs!



Parades have been a part of the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration ever since our country's first birthday. In the early days, parades only included people in government or soldiers. Today, parades also include people from local groups, like softball

teams, or school marching bands. Parades in larger cities, such as New York City, have big floats that can move or large balloons that float high in the air. They may also include people from all over the United States. But most parades have smaller floats and only include people of a town or city. Parades are a fun way to celebrate the birth of our nation and the many people who call it home.

You may have seen something new in July 4<sup>th</sup> parades. People marching in some parades have started to throw candy to the people watching the parades. Children run around and gather the candies in their bags. Some children go home with a full bag of candy. If you go to one of these parades, here is a tip: the parades in small towns often give out the most candy!

Every July 4<sup>th</sup> a hot dog eating contest is held on Coney Island in New York. It started as a hot dog eating contest between four people. Now, people from around the world come to Coney Island to see how many hot dogs they can eat in 10 minutes. So far, the record is 68 hot dogs!



## Rate your thinking and reading

✓ Put a check each time you read one of the chapters of the book.

★ Give yourself a star for Sharing if you told someone about something you learned from reading the chapter.

✚ Give yourself a + if you can tell that your reading is getting smoother.

	1st Read	2nd Read	3rd Read	Sharing	Smoother
Introduction					
Independence Day					
Fireworks					
Parades and Hot Dogs!					

## Comprehension questions

### Independence Day

1. Why is July 4<sup>th</sup> an important day for the United States?

☐ Because July 4<sup>th</sup> is the day the United States passed the Declaration of Independence

☐ Because July 4<sup>th</sup> is the hottest day in summer

☐ Because July 4<sup>th</sup> was the last day of war between England and the United States

☐ Because July 4<sup>th</sup> was the day the United States colonies were formed

2. Which of the following were part of the first July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration?

☐ Bands played music

☐ People marched in parades

☐ People set off fireworks

☐ All of the above

### Fireworks

3. True or false? Fireworks can come in many different shapes and colors.

☐ true ☐ false

4. True or false? In some places in the United States, it is against the law to set off fireworks.

☐ true ☐ false

### Parades and Hot Dogs!

5. The first July 4<sup>th</sup> parade in 1777 included \_\_\_\_\_.

☐ high school marching bands

☐ softball teams

☐ people in government and soldiers

☐ floats with large balloons

6. True or false? Larger cities usually have parades with floats that can move and large balloons.

☐ true ☐ false