Iron is an important mineral needed to produce healthy red blood cells. Read this selection to find out which cereal has the most iron and answer the questions that follow.

Which Cereal Has the Most Iron?

by Sandra Markle

You may be surprised to learn that some cereal makers actually add little flecks of iron to the cereal you eat. They do this because the human body needs a certain amount of iron to help it produce healthy red blood cells. Adding iron is a way to make cereals a better source of iron than they would be naturally. Not all cereals are fortified with the same amount of iron though. Which cereals do you think provide the most iron per one-ounce serving? Check the graph to find out.

Now, take a closer look at the graph to find out more about these cereals.

Milligrams of Iron Per One-Ounce Serving of Cereal

Data from Bowes & Church's Food Values of Portions Commonly Used by Jean A. T. Pennington (J. B. Lippincott Company 1994)
Here’s another surprise. You can remove the iron from these cereals to take a closer look at what you’re eating. To try this for yourself, you’ll need a box of one of the cereals that is an excellent source of iron. You’ll also need a large self-sealing plastic bag, a small self-sealing plastic bag, and a strong bar magnet—one that can easily pick up at least a dozen steel paper clips. Or use three to four weaker bar magnets stacked together. Pour as much of the cereal as you possibly can into the large bag and seal the magnet inside the smaller bag. If the entire magnet will not fit inside the smaller bag, hold the bag tightly around the magnet and use only the covered part. Stir the magnet through the cereal several times.

Look closely. You should see some tiny dark bits stuck to the magnet. They will appear to be standing on end and if you move the magnet, they’ll wiggle. Carefully pick a few off with your fingers. If you have a magnifying glass, use it for an even closer look. These are clusters of the little flecks of iron. Don’t worry, the iron particles scattered through the cereal are too small to affect its taste or color. They’re also tiny enough that they won’t irritate your digestive tract.

When you’re finished, sprinkle the cereal you used for your investigation outdoors for the birds to enjoy.

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1. According to the selection, why is iron important to people?
   A  to make healthy white blood cells
   B  to clean the unhealthy parts out of the blood
   C  to help promote healthy eyesight
   D  to help produce healthy red blood cells

2. What does the graph show?
   A  how much iron is contained in different cereals
   B  how many vitamins are added to different cereals
   C  how much iron appears naturally in cereals
   D  how much iron the body needs to have
3. According to the graph, which cereal below has the most iron?
   A  Post Honey Bunches of Oats
   B  Post Grape Nuts
   C  Kellogg’s Corn Flakes
   D  Kellogg’s All Bran

4. In what way does the author of this selection best help the reader to understand the presence of iron in cereals?
   A  by listing the most popular brands of cereal in the graph
   B  by explaining how much iron the human body needs
   C  by including the experiment that shows iron in the cereals
   D  by explaining why cereal makers add iron to cereal

5. Which is true of the iron particles added to cereals?
   A  They make the cereals taste sweeter.
   B  They make the cereals a brownish color.
   C  They do not change the taste of cereals.
   D  They do not change the nutritional value of cereals.

6. What is the most likely reason iron is added to cereal instead of another type of food?
   A  because morning is a good time to eat iron
   B  because the government requires it
   C  because so many people eat cereal
   D  because iron does not mix with cereal particles

End of Set
### Answers to

**Grade 5  Reading Comprehension Sample Items**

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