

Name _____ Date _____

from The Baker Heater League by Patricia C. and Fredrick McKissack

Model Selection: Nonfiction

Nonfiction is prose in which authors present people, events, and ideas from real life. Nonfiction works can report facts and present ideas. They also might present the author's opinions.

A work of nonfiction can sometimes refer to fictional, or imaginary, ideas. For example, *The Baker Heater League* describes some of the legends surrounding famous railroad men. Many details in these legends are fictional. However, it is a *fact* that Pullman porters liked to tell and retell these fanciful legends.

When deciding what kinds of facts and details to include in a nonfiction work, an author thinks about his or her **purpose**.

- To **persuade** readers, an author may use forceful facts and opinions.
- To **entertain** readers, an author may include amusing or unusual facts and details.
- To **inform** readers, an author may use a wide range of facts about a single topic.

DIRECTIONS: *Read this passage from The Baker Heater League, and answer the questions that follow.*

The real John Henry, believed to be a newly freed slave from North Carolina, joined the West Virginia steel-driving team hired to dig out the Big Bend Tunnel for the C. & O. Railroad, circa 1870. Many stories detail the life and adventures of this two hundred-pound, six-foot man who was so strong he could drive steel with a hammer in each hand. John Henry's death occurred after competing with a steam drill, winning, and then dying.

1. What **real-life person** does this passage describe? _____

What did this person do for a living? _____

2. List two **facts** from the passage.

Fact 1: _____

Fact 2: _____

3. Why do the authors include both facts and legends in *The Baker Heater League*?
(*Hint: What purposes do the authors have for writing the article?*)

