

## Scream Machine

1) Who wants to be scared witless? Surprisingly, lots of people. All over the world, people pay good money and queue for hours to take a few short minutes being flung through the air, screaming and yelling. Why?



2) As children we all grew up going to the park to play on swings and the see-saw or roundabouts. Watched by our parents, we would try to swing as

high as we could. For some people, that was never high enough.

3) In the beginning, a fair was a market that had to have royal permission to be set up. In the 1700's rides were introduced, made of wood and pushed by gangs of boys. It was not till 1868 that Frederick Savage built a steam powered carousel in Britain. From that beginning, the idea spread around the world and the funfair was born.



4) In America, travelling shows, or carnivals, were popular. In 1893, in Chicago, there was a large fair. George Washington Ferris junior built a large wheel in a frame so that it rotated off the ground,

lifting people up so that they could see more. This was the first big wheel (or Ferris wheel).



5) Roller coasters are now the queens of the fun fair. At first, they were man-made hills of snow and ice in Russia in the 1700s that sleds slid down

before being dragged back up to the top by servants. They have metamorphosed into huge constructions of steel powered by huge motors that lift the carriages to the top of hills far higher and steeper than the rides that came before them. All this to make thrill seekers scream and feel unsafe, even as they are held safely in their padded seats.



6) Today, funfairs compete over who has the biggest, fastest, highest most scary rides. People will travel across the world to prove how brave they are by riding on something that children are happy to go on.

7) Of course, there have been accidents, and people have, sadly, died but the same is true of crossing the road, or putting on trousers! There is something different though about the funfair ride. To feel as if you are flying; to be free; to be out of control in a controlled way; to scream and scream in terror and excitement and joy; to ride the scream machine.

How do we identify facts? In a non-fiction text, we expect to find facts, but we can also find point of view and opinion which may not be true for everyone. Look at this question - Who wants to be scared to death? If we look at paragraph one, it tells us 'lots of people'. Is that true or is scared to death an exaggeration?

Warming Up\* Use the text to find the answers.

Monday

Paragraph one

- 1) How long do the rides take?

Paragraph 2

- 2) Name three rides found in a playground.
- 3) What did some children try to do on the swings?

Paragraph 3

- 4) How did rides in the 1700's move?
- 5) Which country were the first powered fair rides made in?
- 6) Were these rides popular? How do we know?

Tuesday

Paragraph 4

- 7) When was the first big wheel shown?
- 8) Which word means to go around?
- 9) In which country is Chicago?
- 10) Where was the photo of the big wheel taken?

Paragraph 5

- 11) What were the first roller coasters made from?
- 12) Which two words tell us that roller coasters are not that dangerous?

Paragraph 7

- 13) Can putting on trousers be dangerous? Copy the sentence that tells us.
- 14) Which word tells us that riding roller coasters can be fun?



## Feeling Confident\*\*

Use the text but be prepared to give your opinion based on what you have read.

### Monday

#### Paragraph 1

- 1) Why might people like being flung through the air?
- 2) How do we know people like going on rides?

#### Paragraph 2

- 3) Why did parents watch the children?

#### Paragraph 3

- 4) Were the old fairs important? How do we know?
- 5) Why do you think gangs of boys were used to push the rides?
- 6) What is a carousel? Describe one.

### Tuesday

#### Paragraph 4

- 7) What were fairs called in America?
- 8) Why is a big wheel called a Ferris wheel?
- 9) In which city was the first Ferris wheel made?
- 10) Exactly where was the photo of the big wheel taken?

#### Paragraph 5

- 11) Were the people who rode the roller coasters in Russia rich or poor? How do we know?
- 12) What is a name for people who like roller coasters?

#### Paragraph 6

- 13) Are roller coasters popular? Copy a phrase that tells us.
- 14) Are roller coasters safe? Explain your answer.

Ready for a Challenge \*\*\* Use the text but be ready to offer your own opinion on what is written and how the author describes things.

Monday

Paragraph 1

- 1) Does the author think funfair rides are good? How do we know?

Paragraph 2

- 2) The author suggests that liking risky fun fair rides starts at a young age. Copy the sentence that tells us this.

Paragraph 3

- 3) What happened at Fairs before the 1700's?
- 4) Which word tells us that the fair has changed?

Paragraph 4

- 5) What was the attraction of riding on a Ferris wheel?

Tuesday

Paragraph 5

- 6) Does the drawing match the description in the text? Which do you think is more accurate? Why?
- 7) Which word means change?
- 8) Write down three words that tell the reader how much roller coasters have changed.

Paragraph 6

- 9) What tells us that roller coasters are big business?
- 10) Copy a phrase that tells you what the author thinks of roller coasters and those who ride them?
- 11) How does paragraph 7 disagree with paragraphs 1 and 6?



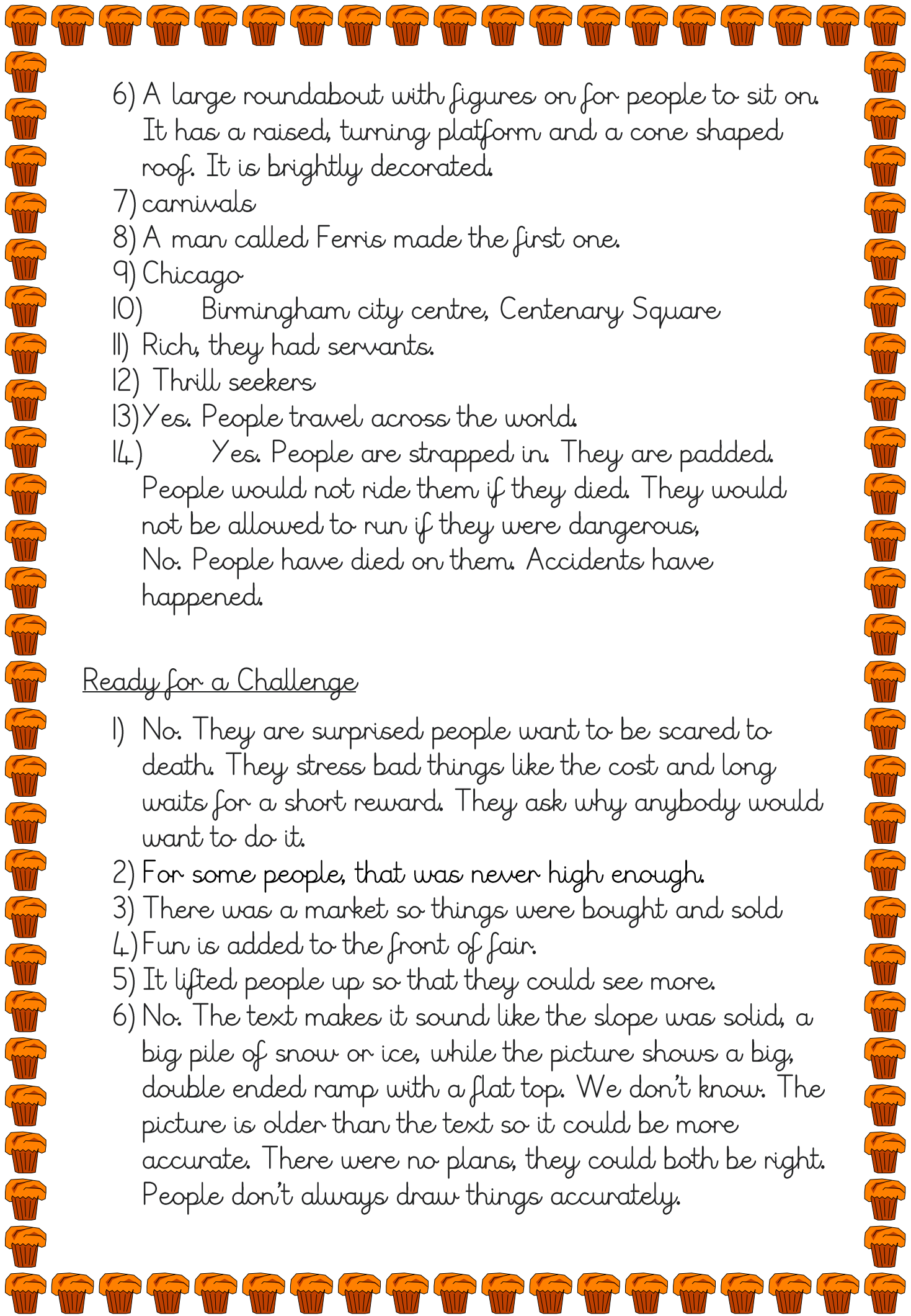
## Answers

### Warming Up

- 1) A few short minutes
- 2) Swings, slides, roundabouts.
- 3) Swing as high as they could.
- 4) They were pushed by gangs of boys.
- 5) Britain
- 6) Yes. The idea spread around the world.
- 7) 1893
- 8) Rotated
- 9) America
- 10) Birmingham city centre
- 11) Ice and snow
- 12) Safely and padded
- 13) Yes. Of course, there have been accidents, and people have, sadly, died but the same is true of crossing the road, or putting on trousers!
- 14) Joy. (Accept excitement)

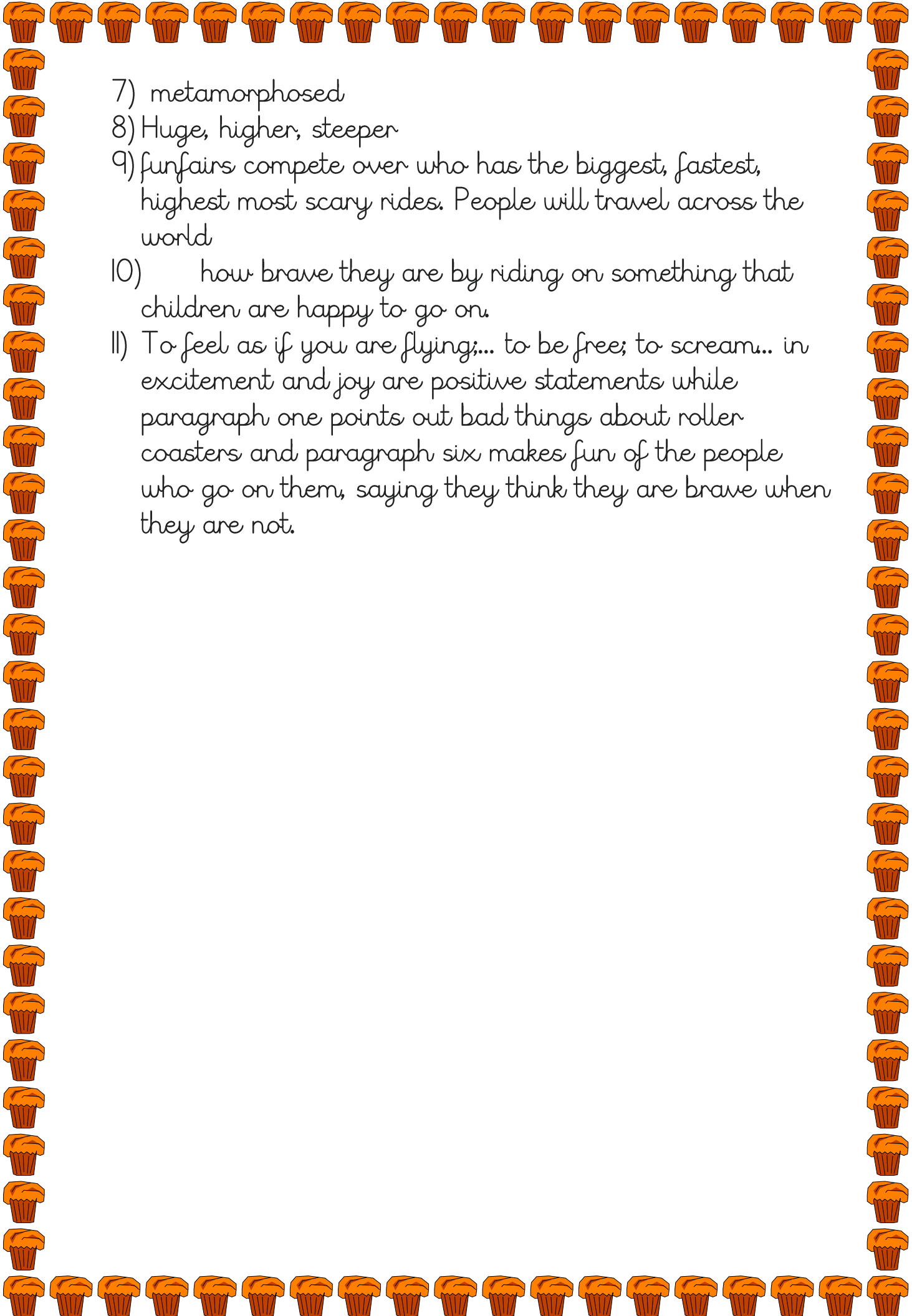
### Feeling Confident

- 1) They like the excitement of feeling scared.
- 2) People pay good money and queue for hours.
- 3) To make sure they are safe and don't do anything silly.
- 4) Yes. They needed permission from the King to take place.
- 5) Boys were cheap and available to do it.

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- 6) A large roundabout with figures on for people to sit on. It has a raised, turning platform and a cone shaped roof. It is brightly decorated.
  - 7) carnivals
  - 8) A man called Ferris made the first one.
  - 9) Chicago
  - 10) Birmingham city centre, Centenary Square
  - 11) Rich, they had servants.
  - 12) Thrill seekers
  - 13) Yes. People travel across the world.
  - 14) Yes. People are strapped in. They are padded. People would not ride them if they died. They would not be allowed to run if they were dangerous, No. People have died on them. Accidents have happened.

### Ready for a Challenge

- 1) No. They are surprised people want to be scared to death. They stress bad things like the cost and long waits for a short reward. They ask why anybody would want to do it.
- 2) For some people, that was never high enough.
- 3) There was a market so things were bought and sold
- 4) Fun is added to the front of fair.
- 5) It lifted people up so that they could see more.
- 6) No. The text makes it sound like the slope was solid, a big pile of snow or ice, while the picture shows a big, double ended ramp with a flat top. We don't know. The picture is older than the text so it could be more accurate. There were no plans, they could both be right. People don't always draw things accurately.

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- 7) metamorphosed
- 8) Huge, higher, steeper
- 9) funfairs compete over who has the biggest, fastest, highest most scary rides. People will travel across the world
- 10) how brave they are by riding on something that children are happy to go on.
- 11) To feel as if you are flying;... to be free; to scream... in excitement and joy are positive statements while paragraph one points out bad things about roller coasters and paragraph six makes fun of the people who go on them, saying they think they are brave when they are not.