Close Reading and Text Dependent Questions in Science
Rube Goldberg Biography (Levers and Pulleys – Grade 5)

The text selection, *Rube Goldberg Biography*, can be found at the following link:
http://www.rubegoldberg.com/about

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Rube Goldberg (1889–1970) was an American cartoonist who worked for the Chicago Tribune from 1913 to 1959. He is best known for his complex, convoluted machines and devices, often featuring levers and pulleys, which he created for his comic strip, *Collier’s Weekly*. A founding member of the New York Cartoonists Club, Goldberg was a beloved cartoonist, and his work is celebrated for its wit and creativity.

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Look in the Student Learning Outcome Document for guidance on when this should be taught.
http://bpscurriculumandinstruction.weebly.com/student-learning-outcomes-by-grade.html

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Rube Goldberg Biography (Levers and Pulleys – Grade 5)
Student Questions

1. What job did Rube have before working at the newspaper?

2. What did he do while working for the newspapers that eventually led him to New York City?

3. The article states, “Rube’s early years as an engineer informed his most acclaimed work.” Describe the type of invention that the author believes made Rube Goldberg famous.

4. The author states “The promise and pitfalls of modern technology make Rube Goldberg’s inventions even more relevant now…” How are his inventions “even more relevant?”

5. How does the author demonstrate that building a Rube Goldberg machine is a major accomplishment?
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Sample Answers

1. What job did Rube have before working at the newspaper?
   Students will answer this question—that he was an engineer at the Sewers Department—while they are doing the read aloud portion. They will do a turn and talk and then share out answers.

2. What did he do while working for the newspapers that eventually led him to New York City?
   He created drawings and ultimately cartoons that led to his being hired at the Evening Mail, a newspaper in NYC.

3. The article states, “Rube’s early years as an engineer informed his most acclaimed work.” Describe the type of invention that the author believes made Rube Goldberg famous.
   According to the author, what made Rube Goldberg famous were his drawings of simple tasks that were “solved” by extraordinarily complicated designs.

4. The author states “The promise and pitfalls of modern technology make Rube Goldberg’s inventions even more relevant now…” How are his inventions “even more relevant?”
   Modern technology offers solutions to even the simplest of tasks, but also can complicate things unnecessarily – much like a Rube Goldberg creation.

5. How does the author demonstrate that building a Rube Goldberg machine is a major accomplishment?
   By devoting an entire paragraph to the National Contest and detailing how the winners are treated like celebrities.