



Get Your Mind Poppin’

As you read each paragraph,
write a subtitle telling the main idea.

1. _____

How popcorn pops isn’t a mystery – it’s science! Hundreds of years ago, some people believed a little demon was inside each kernel that made it pop. The real reason it pops is that it contains water stored in a small circle of soft, white starch. Whenever the kernel is heated, the water heats, turns to steam, and builds up pressure. This steam keeps trying to spread out even though there’s no more room, and the surface surrounding the starch gives way and explodes. This causes the kernel to turn inside out and then you have hot, fluffy popcorn.

2. _____

Popcorn was a gift from the Native American Indians. The Colonists got their first taste at the first Thanksgiving feast in 1621. The popcorn was popped in clay pots over an open fire. Some kinds were even popped right on the cob! Early English settlers liked to eat popcorn with milk and sugar – it was the first breakfast cereal! Today popcorn is still one of the oldest American snack foods. Scientists have found 1,000-year-old popcorn kernels in South America that still pop!

3. _____

Popcorn is just one type of corn – perhaps the most fun type! It comes in many colors (yellow, white, red, brown, purple, blue, multi-colored) and even different flavors. See if you can find some of these at your grocery store. Popcorn is used for snacking or for decoration.

4. _____

People in Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, and Ohio eat more popcorn than people in other U.S. states. Do you know why? It’s because those are the states where the most popcorn is grown! Find these states on a map and label them with a piece of popcorn!

5. _____

Popcorn is very nutritious. Plain popcorn has no fat which is good for the heart, and it contains vitamins and lots of fiber which are good for the body. Americans eat more than 15 billion quarts of popcorn a year! That’s about 60 quarts for each person in U.S.! How much popcorn do you eat in a year?