**Silly Putty**

**Level 1: What does the text say?**

General Understanding:

* What is Silly Putty?
* Who invented Silly Putty?
* Why was Silly Putty invented?
* What is Silly Putty made of?

Key Details:

* What is its original purpose? (Replacement of rubber)
* Who invented it? (James Wright)
* Putty didn’t work for what it was intended for—why was it used as a toy instead?

**Level 2: How does the text work?**

Vocabulary:

* Synthetic?
* Ironically?
* How does the term “silly novelty” describe the invention Silly Putty?

Structure:

* An article—it’s not too long or short
* Where might you see an example of this kind of writing?
* Cause and effect? (Chronological)
* From whose point of view was this written?
* What organization structure does the author use to develop the story?
* How do the comic illustrations enhance the text?

Author’s Craft:

* Why did he use citations?
* How did he use bullets?
* Where is a semi-colon used?
* What’s the difference between a colon and a semi-colon?
* What does the author mean when he refers to James Wright as “the creator of the most interesting and most worthless invention in the company’s history”?

**Level 3: What does the text mean?**

Author’s Purpose:

* What’s the author’s purpose?
* What is the author’s purpose in telling the history of Silly Putty?
* Why was it important for General Electric to create a use for Silly Putty?

Intertextual Connections:

* How are the 2 stories the same?
* How are the 2 stories different?
* Silly Putty & Slinky articles
* Are there other inventions that started out as flops that turned into a success story?

**Level 4: What does the text inspire me to do? What does it mean to me?**

Opinion with Evidence or Argument:

* It failed in its purpose but how did it succeed?
* I believe one of the themes from this article, “Silly Putty” is don’t give up easily. For example, the boss of James Wright suggested that there must be some use for this invention. So the company held a contest to find a practical purpose for it. This shows that even though the company faced road blocks they kept looking for a way the product could be successful.
* Research other inventions where inventors had mishaps and setbacks but created or engineered another purpose for their product.