

THREE DS OF SPEED

ACTIVITY SHEET 4: DRAFTING

NAME _____

⚡ GAME CHANGER ⚡

Winning a NASCAR race requires more than a superspeedy car. Drivers also use a strategy called **drafting** to get ahead on the track. Read the passage below to learn about the technique's accidental discovery. Then answer the questions on the right.

THE DISCOVERY OF DRAFTING



In 1960, racecar driver Junior Johnson was gearing up for the second ever Daytona 500 race. But he realized he had a problem. His car was much slower than those of the top contenders in the race.

During a practice run, Johnson noticed that when he pulled up close behind a faster car his vehicle sped up, too. By the final lap of his run, he'd built up enough speed to overtake the other car. Johnson had discovered drafting.

Drafting occurs when a car lines up right behind the car in front of it, with just inches between their bumpers. Leading cars block the flow of air, creating an area of low pressure behind them. This area acts like a vacuum, sucking the trailing cars forward. The trailing cars push high-pressure air over the leading cars' spoilers, reducing their drag and also giving them a boost. The more cars that are grouped in a drafting formation, the faster they all will go.

Using the drafting tactic, Johnson won the Daytona 500 even though his car wasn't the fastest on the track. Today, drafting is a common strategy in NASCAR races.

1 What was the central idea of the text?

- A** Drafting is a common strategy used in NASCAR races.
- B** Drafting was first used by accident.
- C** By driving close behind other cars, racecars can move faster.
- D** A car doesn't have to be the fastest to win a race.

2 The purpose of the third paragraph is to:

- A** Explain the science of how drafting works.
- B** Describe the first time that drafting was used in NASCAR.
- C** Detail how drafting has changed in the last 40 years.
- D** List the pros and cons of drafting.

3 What is a synonym for the word *tactic*?

- A** ability **C** idea
- B** formation **D** strategy

4 Describe what a drafting formation looks like.

5 Which statement in the text supports the idea that multiple drivers can benefit from drafting?
