**KHAEN**

1. Peter bought Alex a khaen.
2. It was a gift for his birthday.
3. Peter brought it all the way back from Laos.
4. Khaen are very popular in Laos, northeast Thailand, northern Vietnam, and southern China.
5. There are several different types of khaen.
6. All of Alex’s friends will get to enjoy the khaen.
7. Alex’s new khaen is about three feet in length, which is smaller than some—they can be as big as six feet long!
8. Alex plans to use it for his storytelling performances.
9. Traditionally, khaen are used at social functions and religious ceremonies.
10. Alex’s khaen is made out of a special bamboo.
11. Peter thinks Alex will have fun learning how to play his new khaen.
12. Khaen was given its name long ago by the governor of Laos. *Khaen* means “better,” which refers to the instrument sounding better than any other the governor had ever heard.
13. Alex’s khaen looks similar to a pan flute, with rows of long tubes bound together. There is a chamber made of wood that goes through the center of the tubes.
14. Alex holds the khaen with the pipes in a vertical position and blows through the mouthpiece to produce a sound that is like a cross between an accordion and a harmonica.
15. Western spellings include *khaen, khene,* and *kaen,* but the word is pronounced approximately “can,” as in “tin can.”