

Elephants

Elephants are the largest animals that live on the surface of the earth. They are found on the continents of Asia and Africa. While Asian and African elephants are distantly related, they show different bodily characteristics¹. African elephants are larger and heavier compared to Asian elephants. An average adult African elephant weighs around 8,800 to 16,500 pounds and is about 12 feet tall. Asian elephants are smaller in size and weigh between 7,000 and 13,000 pounds. They also have smoother skin. The ears of Asian elephants are much smaller compared to African elephants. African elephants' ears reach down to their neck. The size of the tusks also differs between the two types of elephants. All African elephants, including females, have large tusks. Around half of female Asian elephants do not have tusks at all. Instead, they have small teeth-like structures known as tushes.

Despite the bodily differences, both African and Asian elephants have similar behavioral patterns. They both live in herds and the oldest female elephant leads the herd. The diets of these elephants are similar as well. Both eat grass and lots of leaves.

¹ a special quality of a person, animal, plant, or thing

1. Which statement **BEST** describes the main idea of “Elephants”?

- a. The passage describes how elephants eat leaves.
- b. The passage describes why elephants have long tusks.
- c. The passage describes the similarities and differences between elephants from Asia and Africa.
- d. The passage describes the environments that African and Asian elephants live in.

2. Which statement **BEST explains how the main idea is supported in “Elephants”?**

- a. The passage discusses each elephant to show how they are similar and how they are different.
- b. The passage discusses each elephant and tells what they eat.
- c. The passage discusses how elephants learned to use their long trunks.
- d. The passage discusses how elephants act when they live in zoos.

3. How is the piece above organized?

- a. cause/effect
- b. chronological order
- c. problem/solution
- d. compare/contrast

4. What is the first contrast the author makes between African and Asian elephants?

- a. their size
- b. their skin
- c. their tusks
- d. their food

5. Which sentence **BEST describes how African and Asian elephants are similar?**

- a. All African elephants, including females, have large tusks.
- b. Around half of female Asian elephants do not have tusks at all.
- c. Elephants are the largest animals that live on the surface of the earth.
- d. They both live in herds and the oldest female elephant leads the herd.