International School of Monterrey

Junior High School **9th Grade**
Trimester 2 **Literature**

Name _____ Date _____ List #: ____-____

AMAZING KOMODO DRAGONS

Once, a British gazette had an unusual story. Scientists at a zoo made a discovery about komodo dragons. Komodo dragons are giant lizards that grow up to two and a half meters long. A female lizard at the zoo had babies. However, it had never been around a male lizard in its entire life. After the scientists publicized their discovery, many people thought it was fictitious.

But it was true. It was discovered that female komodo dragons can have babies without the help of their male counterparts. This contradicts what scientists know about how most animals have babies.

In most cases, there are many things that can obstruct this type of reproduction. For example, adult males and females carry different genes needed to make an embryo. If the genes are homogeneous, the babies are weaker and have genetic problems. Over time, the weakened species dies out completely. This makes it necessary for the male to be involved. However, scientists verified that when Komodo babies are born, their genes aren't the exact same genes as their mother. Also, they are devoid of any genetic problems.

Scientists theorize that Komodo dragons developed the ability because it helps the species fend off extinction. If a volcano erupts, lava can kill all of the komodo dragons on an island. However, as long as one female eludes death, she can prolong the survival of the species. Luckily, Komodo dragons are vigorous swimmers. So the surviving female can plunge into the ocean and swim to another island. When she comes ashore, she can reproduce by herself. Over time, the genes within the population diverge. Then, the sparse population increases. Once again there is a surplus of lizards on one island. Scientists think that this may be how the lizards took over all of the islands in that area.

Reading Comprehension

Part A: Mark each statement T for true or F for false. Use complete sentences to rewrite the false statements to make them true. (5 pts.)

____1. People thought that the story publicized in the gazette about the komodo dragons was fictitious.

____2. Female komodo dragons can have babies without their male counterparts.

____3. Scientists verified that baby komodo dragons have homogeneous genes if they don't have fathers, which leads to genetic problems.

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____4. Scientists theorize that the special ability of komodo dragons help them elude predators.

____5. A female komodo dragon can increase a sparse population so that there are surplus lizards on one island.

Part B: Use complete sentences to answer the following questions. (5 pts.)

6. How do komodo dragons contradict what scientists know about reproduction?

7. Why is it possible for a komodo dragon to come ashore at a different island?

8. How can a female komodo dragon prolong the survival of the species in case of a disaster?

9. According to the passage, what happens to the genes of the population overtime?

10. What will happen to the komodo babies if the genes are homogeneous?

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