



Name _____ Date _____

THE DOVE

The white dove is a symbol of peace throughout the world. The dove is actually a pigeon. Doves live together in small colonies. Its main predator is the Peregrine falcon. The white dove ranges in size from 12 to 14 inches long. It has white feathers, pink feet and legs, a pink bill, and red eyes. The dove has good eyesight and can see in color.

The dove will build a small shallow nest made of twigs and sticks. The nests are usually found on ledges. They are found along the seaside cliffs or even in the city on buildings and skyscrapers. The dove lays its eggs in the nest and both parents incubate the eggs. Only one to two eggs, called a clutch, are laid at a time.

Like most pigeons, the dove eats mostly seeds but will eat just about anything. The pigeon has only 37 taste buds, while humans have over 9,000. This means that pigeons are not picky eaters. When the dove drinks water, it actually sucks it up, which is unlike any other bird. The pigeon can fly up to 50 mph. Most doves stay pretty close to home and never go farther than 12 miles from their home. However, the dove has very strong wings and can fly much farther if necessary. The dove has a life expectancy of five years in the wild.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. A likely reason people are fascinated with the dove is because it . . .
 - a. is a fearless bird.
 - b. can get as heavy as 150 pounds.
 - c. is called by a variety of names.
 - d. has all white feathers.
2. Another word for *predator* is . . .
 - a. hunter.
 - b. characteristic.
 - c. victim.
 - d. diet.
3. After reading the passage, which of the following statements could be inferred?
 - a. The dove is a peacemaker with other animals.
 - b. The dove is a messy eater.
 - c. The dove is a great flyer.
 - d. The dove prefers the city to the seaside.