Name_____

Elephants

The elephant is a mammal with many unique traits. This colossal beast is the largest animal to live on land. The elephant also has the largest ears of any other animal. Another fascinating feature about the elephant is its long nose. This long nose actually forms into a long trunk that can be used as a helpful appendage. Just imagine having an extra hand on the middle of your face! Only the elephant has bragging rights to such an extraordinary trunk.

There are basically two main types of elephants living in the world today. The African and Asian elephants live on different continents, just as their names imply. The African elephants are actually larger than the ones that live in Asia. Also, the ears of the Asian elephant are smaller than the African elephant's ears.

Elephants have intricate families. The matriarch is the head of the elephant family. She uses her excellent memory to lead the family over specific migration routes. She knows the best way to travel for survival and memorizes the important locations of certain food and water sources. Adult males rarely live with the females. Generally, there are about ten elephants living together at a time. These small family groups usually have several adult females and their young. The family is then led by the oldest female, who becomes the matriarch. Males leave the group once they become adults; however, they may visit the family group on occasion. These small families often join with other families and some independent males to create a population of these amazing animals.

Text Questions

1. If a diagram were drawn comparing the African elephant and the Asian elephant, which piece of information could be placed on the chart?
   a. information showing the female elephant as the matriarch
   b. information showing the African elephant as a larger type than the Asian elephant
   c. information explaining the population of elephants
   d. information explaining the uniqueness of the elephant's trunk
2. What is the purpose of the second paragraph?
   a. to give more information about the Asian elephant
   b. to give more information about the African elephant
   c. to assure you are not afraid of elephants
   d. to explain the differences between African and Asian elephants
3. What can one infer about the family relationships of elephants?
   a. There is a hierarchy among elephants in each family.
   b. Males are the dominant members of each family.
   c. When young elephants are born, they must be ready to live on their own.
   d. The structural unit of the elephant's family changes every five years.
4. Which statement is a fact from the story?
   a. Elephants have begun to migrate to North and South America.
   b. Elephants have intricate families.
   c. Elephants are trained to use their noses to pick up things but do not mimic this behavior in the wild.
   d. Elephants are ruled by the patriarchs of each family group.
5. Elephants are native to which two continents?
   a. Africa and North America
   b. Asia and Africa
   c. Europe and Asia
   d. Africa and South America

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