

The fossil consists of a complete skull of an archaeocete, an extinct group of ancestors of modern cetaceans. Although limited to a skull, the *Pakicetus* fossil provides precious details on the origins of cetaceans. The skull is cetacean-like but its jawbones lack the enlarged space that is filled with fat or oil and used for receiving underwater sound in modern whales. *Pakicetus* probably detected sound through the ear opening as in land mammals. The skull also lacks a blowhole, another cetacean adaptation for diving. Other features, however, show experts that *Pakicetus* is a transitional form between a group of extinct flesh-eating mammals, the mesonychids, and cetaceans. It has been suggested that *Pakicetus* fed on fish in shallow water and was not yet adapted for life in the open ocean. It probably bred and gave birth on land.

3. The word “precious” in the passage is closest in meaning to

- exact
- scarce
- valuable
- initial

4. *Pakicetus* and modern cetaceans have similar

- hearing structures
- adaptations for diving
- skull shapes
- breeding locations

5. The word “It” in the passage refers to

- Pakicetus*
- fish
- life
- ocean