Name: Class:

# What Is Mimicry?

There are thousands of animals in our world. Some of these animals are predators, and some of them will end up as prey. They all need to eat. They all need to keep themselves safe. Some animals, over time, have adapted certain features that match those of other species. These features fool their predators and help the animals live longer. These animals are called mimics.

Mimics copy the appearance, action, or sound of another animal that predators fear or do not like to eat. The animals they copy are called models. Let's learn more about these copycats in nature.

## Copycat!

There are different kinds of mimicry. One kind is called Batesian mimicry. It is named after Henry Walter Bates, a naturalist. He discovered that some weaker animals adapted to their environment by copying or looking like dangerous animals. These weaker animals often have no defenses, such as stingers or poisons. Instead, they look very much like other animals that do, and so their enemies leave them alone.

One example of Batesian mimicry is the hoverfly. Over time this fly has adapted to have yellow and black stripes like a bee. Animals know that a bee will sting them, so they leave this kind of fly alone.

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# A Closer Look at Batesian Mimicry

Coral, king, and milk snakes are excellent examples of Batesian mimicry. Coral snakes are poisonous. King and milk snakes are not. Coral snakes have colorful scales in bands of black, red, and yellow. The yellow bands always touch the red ones. These colors announce the snakes' deadly poison. Some king and milk snakes also have bands of red, black, and yellow, but they are arranged in a different order.

It is not always easy to tell these snakes apart. A predator will often leave king or milk snakes alone because it sees their colors and believes that they are poisonous, too.

## Questions:

1. The main idea of this text is:
   a. Predators and preys
   b. How coral snakes find their prey
   c. Some animals' clever defenses

2. Why are there animal mimics?
   a. To help other animals
   b. To be safe and live longer
   c. To grow healthier

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3. Mimics copy the appearance, action or sound of another animal that _____.

a. Predators like to eat

b. Predators fear or don't like to eat

c. Predators hunt for food

4. Henry Walter Bates is from _____.

a. America

b. New Zeeland

c. Not given

5. The word "environment" means _____.

a. Living things and place conditions

b. Animals that live in the same place

c. The weather and the climate of a specific place

6. The hoverfly acts like a _____.

a. Lizard

b. Frog

c. Bee

7. King and milk snakes are poisonous.

a. True

b. False

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8. One of these is NOT an example of Batesian mimicry is _____.

   a. The hoverfly

   b. Coral, king and milk snakes

   c. Cheetahs

9. Choose an antonym for the word "arrange"!

   a. Disagree

   b. Disorder

   c. Choose

10. What is the author's purpose of writing this text?

   a. To entertain

   b. To share his opinion

   c. To inform

11. "A predator will often leave king or milk snakes alone." The subject of this sentence is:

   a. King and milk snakes

   b. A predator

   c. Will often leave

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