PREPARATION OF READING COMPREHENSION EXERCISE (CYCLE 6)

DUCKS

When I think about ducks, I picture my mother's pets. She saved Lucy and Fran from a swampy area when I was 16 years old. The little ducks were weak and sick. My mother helped them to get healthy.

Lucy and Fran lived in a large cardboard box in the garage. They became family pets. They were members of our family. Lucy followed me around. She quacked and quacked. She liked attention.

My brother Tim read everything he could find about ducks. He learned to care for our pets. He made sure that the box in the garage was fit for our pets. It had a heat lamp and a feeder. He gave them water, shavings, and fresh straw each day. What a hit! Lucy and Fran loved their house. They quacked to say, "Thank you!"

One rainy morning, Lucy waddled near me to the mailbox. She walked so close we bumped into each other. I tumbled into a gigantic mud puddle. All the letters from the mailbox got wet and soggy. They dripped with muddy, brown water.

To make things worse, Tim watched from the window. When I got back into the house, he was on the kitchen floor holding the sides of his stomach. He roared with laughter.

I stomped my feet and threw up my arms. My mom calmly listened to me shout and carry on.

"It's okay, honey. If you prefer to splash in puddles, you can trade beds with the ducks!" she comforted.

With that in mind, I went to the garage and made my peace with the ducks. My own bed looked a lot better than their shavings and heat lamp.

1. What is the name of the author's little brother?
   a. Tim b. Honey c. Mom d. Sam
2. The story "Ducks" is mostly about a . . .
   a. boy's journey to save two ducks.
   b. person's adventure with two ducks.
   c. mother's love for animals.
   d. family's adventure with ducks on vacation.
3. The author's purpose for this passage is . . .
   a. to inform the reader about mistakes people make while caring for ducks.
   b. to inform the reader about the proper care and feeding of ducks.
   c. to persuade the reader to buy a pet duck.
   d. to entertain the reader with a story from the past.
4. To properly care for ducks, you should get . . .
   a. a feeder, a large cardboard box, newspaper clippings, and a heat lamp.
   b. fresh water, a large cardboard box, and a heat lamp.
   c. a box of band aids, fresh water, a large cardboard box, shavings, and a heat lamp.
   d. a stuffed animal, fresh water, a miniature cardboard box, shavings, and a heat lamp.

RACCOONS

Raccoons are cute and clever. People love their little masked faces and their comical antics. Raccoons can solve problems, and they can make messes. A raccoon can open the lid on a trashcan. Some have even opened entire garage doors!

Raccoons live in forests. They climb trees and live in nests in tree trunks. They can fish and hunt for food. Raccoons also live in cities and near homes. They live in parks and backyards. They travel through waterways and eat trash.

People should carefully wrap trash that contains food. Raccoons feast on scraps of bread, vegetables, meats, and sweets. Put these "treats" in tied plastic bags and put the bags in a strong trashcan. Make sure the lid is tight, or a raccoon might snack at your house this evening!

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Raccoons are messy. They scatter food scraps, paper, cans, and other trash in yards and other areas. Would you like to clean up after a raccoon?

Raccoons played a part in history. Pictures of pioneer men wearing raccoon skin hats are often found in history books. Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett wore them. The caps kept heads warm and protected them from being scratched by branches.

Raccoons look sweet, but beware. People think they are cuddly, but raccoons are wild animals. Raccoons are dangerous. They have sharp teeth and claws. They can carry diseases. Never approach a wild raccoon. They are cute, but they are not pets.

1. Where do raccoons live?

a. only in forests
b. only near people
c. neither in forests nor near people
d. in forests and near people

2. What are some of the negative things raccoons do?

a. They damage property and shred paper.
b. They can open your lids and doors.
c. They tear trash out of cans.
d. All of the above.

3. If you gave the passage a new title, it could be . . .

a. "Battle Over Raccoons."
b. "Keeping Your Own Raccoon."
c. "How to Care for a Raccoon of Your Own."
d. "Raccoons Are Clever but Dangerous."

4. Raccoon hats were worn by . . .

a. pilgrims.
b. cowboys.
c. pioneers.
d. pirates.

MILKING COWS

Cows first came to America in 1611. Each farming family usually kept its own cow. A family member would milk the cow each day. It gave them milk to drink. They had to milk the cows by hand. The milk then was boiled in a big pot over the fire. It then had to cool, and after that someone skimmed the cream off the top of the pan.

Dairy farmers raise and milk cows for us. For hundreds of years, farmers spent many hours milking. Farmers, or their family members, sat on stools to squeeze milk from the cows' udders. This chore was time consuming and tiring.

Today's farmers use machines to help with milking. They can milk many cows at one time. The machines often do a better job milking than a person could.

These modern machines have long, clear hoses. The hoses carry milk to big metal tanks. The tanks hold and clean the milk. These machines help farmers milk enough cows for us all to have milk in our homes.

1. According to the passage, what has improved over time?

a. Farmers can milk cows much faster.
b. Farmers can run faster.
c. Farmers can plow fields faster.
d. Farmers can drive tractors faster.

2. The main idea of the last paragraph is . . .

a. all cows chew their cud.
b. cows have four digestive compartments.
c. cows make wonderful household pets.
d. modern equipment helps farmers.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

3. The first cow arrived in America in . . .

a. 1610. b. 1612. c. 1611. d. 1832.

4. What is the main idea of the passage?

a. learning to care for a cow
b. how technology has changed milking cows
c. how to search for information about cows
d. how to plan an interview with a farmer

SHEEP

If you are wearing a warm, wooly sweater, thank a sheep. Wool from sheep's coats have been knit, woven, and sewn into products for many centuries. Wool is soft and warm. It resists fire and can be easily stored.

People make sweaters, clothing, blankets, rugs, carpets, and even mattresses for beds from wool. The natural fibers are washed, dyed, and combed to make yarn.

Sheep need very little care. They can climb rocks without falling. They can go for long periods without water. They eat wood and shrubs, which can be found anywhere.

Sheep are raised in one of two ways. Some sheep live in fenced pastures. Farmers provide food and water every day. Other sheep are more independent. They live on land that is owned by the farmer. They roam the grounds and find food for themselves.

Some sheep are still wild. The largest of the wild sheep live in Siberia. They are four feet (1.2 meters) tall at the shoulder. Wild sheep have enemies. Wolves and coyotes hunt sheep. Diseases and insects can make sheep sick.

Today, more than 800 breeds and varieties of sheep exist. There are five main groups of sheep. They are grouped by their fleece (wool) types. They are fine wool, long wool, crossbred wool, medium wool, and coarse wool.

People value sheep for their wool, and for meat and fat. Meat from sheep is called mutton. It is used in stews and other dishes. Fat from sheep can be made into candles and soap.

1. Why are sheep important to people?

a. They are cute pets.
b. Sheep can cut your grass.
c. Sheep provide wool, meat, and fats.
d. Counting sheep helps people sleep.

2. What is sheep meat called?

a. mutton
b. steak
c. pork
d. beef

3. What product made of sheep fat can be burned in your home?

a. soap
b. a candle
c. carpet
d. paper

4. The main idea of this passage is . . .

a. to entertain the reader with funny sheep jokes.
b. to inform the reader about the many things sheep contribute to our lives.
c. to persuade the reader to sheep sit.
d. to inform the reader about things to look for when buying sheep.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

CLASSIFYING ANIMALS

Did you know that there are over 1,000,000 different species, or types, of animals? With so many species, scientists have to find a way to sort them into groups. Two of the main groups are vertebrates and invertebrates.

Vertebrates are animals that have a backbone. Humans are in this group. Also in this group are whales, monkeys, birds, and frogs. Just about any pet you have in your home is a vertebrate. Dogs, cats, goldfish, hamsters, and snakes are vertebrates.

Invertebrates have no backbone. Many of them live in the ocean. Clams, jellyfish, squids, and octopuses are invertebrates. Those that live on land are spiders, worms, and insects.

Scientists are finding new species of animals every day. Every one of them can be put into one of these two groups.

1. What are two ways, according to this passage, animals are classified or sorted?
   a. land and water animals
   b. mammals and jellyfish
   c. invertebrates and vertebrates
   d. color and shape

2. Based on the passage, which is the best definition of invertebrates?
   a. animals that have several backbones
   b. animals that have one backbone
   c. animals that have no backbones
   d. animals that prefer to swim in the ocean

3. Human beings are in the category of . . .
   a. invertebrates.
   b. vertebrates.
   c. neither of these.
   d. both of these.

4. Which of the animals below would fit into the category of invertebrates?
   a. giraffe
   b. bird
   c. squid
   d. pig

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