Test 6—Main Idea, Plot, and Purpose

Directions: Read the passage to answer questions 1-5.

Adapted from "The Animal Mind: Smart and Sensitive."

We humans are used to thinking that our minds separate us from other animals. But new studies show that animals are quite intelligent and sensitive.

Animal intelligence isn't found only in mammals. It can be found in other animals, such as birds. Although we sometimes call people "birdbrains' as an insult, our feathered friends can be very smart. Some can solve puzzles. For example, ravens can untie knots. Some birds can use tools. Some crows, for example, use twigs as spears. Some birds can even use our language. An African Grey parrot named Alex does more than just imitate human sounds. This parrot can name dozens of objects. It also seems to understand the ideas of "same," "different," and "amount."

Animals are able to feel emotion, too. This ability can be as painful for them as it is for humans. For example, some baboons live in groups where the leaders control through fear. Low-ranking baboons can live in a constant state of stress. This stress can cause health problems, just as it does in humans.

Some animals feel sadness when a family member dies. Elephants show interest even in decades-old elephant bones. Like humans, they are connected to each other in many ways.

1. **Main Idea/essential message**
   What would be another good title for the above passage?
   a. The Human mind of birds.
   b. Stress as a health problem for birds.
   c. Humans and Animals share similar Intelligence.
   d. African Grey Parrots are Sensitive Too.

2. **Details/facts**
   What details in the text supports the idea that birds are smart?
   a. Birds show interest and live in constant stress.
   b. Birds have their own language and use twigs as spears.
   c. Some birds use tools and imitate human sounds.
   d. Birds have large brains and feel stress.

3. **Main Idea/essential message**
   What can you conclude about baboon societies after reading the passage?
   a. Baboons are different from other monkeys.
   b. Baboons fight all of the time.
   c. Baboons are a lot like birds.
   d. Baboons feel emotions like humans.

4. **Main Idea/essential message**
   How can Alex, the parrot, understand human sounds?
   a. because he has practice a lot.
   b. because he is very intelligent.
   c. because he mimics whatever he hears.
   d. because he grew up in a pet store.

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5. **Details/fact**

What details or facts lead you to believe that animals are "sensitive". Use details and information from the passage to support your response?

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