



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## THE SLOTH

What is a sloth? Did you know that a sloth is a slow-moving animal that lives in trees? Sometimes people are called sloths, but that's not because they live in trees; rather, it's because they are moving so slowly. A sloth spends most of its time hanging upside down in a tree. A sloth will eat, sleep, and give birth hanging upside down! Their curved claws make it easy for them to hang onto the tree.

Sloths are four-legged animals. They spend almost all of their lives up in a tree. They walk upside down along the branches. Sloths are also known to be good swimmers. Sloths are found in Central and South America.

The sloth is nocturnal, which means it is active at night instead of the day. This means that it sleeps during the day. The sloth usually keeps to itself, although some female sloths congregate in small groups.

The sloth has a thick, brown coat of fur. They are plant-eaters and eat mostly leaves, tender shoots, and fruit. The sloth has green algae growing on its fur. The sloth will lick the algae for nutrients. The algae also helps protect the sloth from enemies. Eagles, jaguars, and humans hunt the sloth. The algae growing on the sloth helps to camouflage it.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- In order for a sloth to live in a tree, it needs . . .
  - courage.
  - to be the right size.
  - curved claws.
  - to eat only plants.
- According to the passage, how do sloths keep from being eaten?
  - They are easily hidden.
  - They are camouflaged by green algae.
  - They are slow moving.
  - They have thick, brown fur.
- Why did the author include the first paragraph?
  - to introduce the main points about the sloth
  - to clear up misconceptions about the sloth
  - to generate questions about the sloth
  - to identify the food eaten by the sloth
- The best way to find the answer to question #3 above is to . . .
  - reread the entire passage.
  - reread the first paragraph and determine the main idea.
  - look for the words "sloth" and "habitat."
  - skim the passage and look for clues.