Reading Comprehension

Read the text and circle the correct option, true (T) or false (F).

The Eurasian Otter

Anyone fortunate enough to have seen an otter swimming under water would probably not believe their own eyes. One would never guess that this dexterous creature was anything other than a fish. To learn that it is a furry mammal comes as a big surprise.

One could say that it is half mammal, half fish, since it has a number of qualities which enable it to live perfectly well under water.

The Eurasian or European otter is one of the most widespread mammal species. It lives on the European, Asian, and African continents, and is native to around 81 different countries. Given its wide range, it is not surprising that this species is not considered to be endangered.

This semiaquatic animal lives near water, but the type of water body varies. It lives near streams, rivers, lakes, swamps, and along coastlines, depending on the country. This species prefers areas where there is a lot of plant life along the shore or river bank.

The Eurasian otter has webbed paws to help it paddle efficiently. Its tail is long, strong and flattened, acting as a sturdy propeller. Its coat is perfectly fashioned for life under water too. The fur is too short and tightly packed –to avoid water retention.

When pursuing fish, its favourite prey, the otter can reach incredible speeds and very few escape its eager clutches. Sometimes, when the otter is not actually hungry, it captures fish just for the fun of it.

Unlike most of its relatives, the otter uses its front paws to catch its food. Some varieties of otter even pick up stones with their paws which they use to crack open shells of crabs, oysters, etc.

Zoologists claim that an otter can happily breathe underwater for periods of approximately six or seven minutes –sometimes more- particularly when it is playing or carrying out its mating ritual.

When making its home, the otter chooses a natural hollow near the water. Sometimes it digs out its own cave below the water, leaving room to breathe. There, it will give birth to two or three young babies in the spring and after three weeks, they can leave the den.

The Eurasian otter is believed to be solitary. However, sometimes it is seen in family groups. It teaches its young otters to fend for and hunt for themselves, but the mother is always sure to take them on the safest routes.

Although the otter population of Europe and Asia is abundant, many rivers no longer have any, due to the pollution or excessive hunting. Now these lovable creatures can only be found in the purest of waters.

Adapted from Mode 3-Workbook (Nelson)

1. The otter is a species of the fish family. T F
2. The otter is at risk of becoming extinct. T F
3. Otters have a flat tail to help them move through water. T F
4. Otters help their young babies to take care of themselves. T F
5. It is possible to find otters everywhere in Europe. T F

AACI use only	
1st	
2nd	
3rd	
R	

LIVEWORKSHEETS

SECTION B: Language in Use

I) Read the passage below. Choose the correct option for each gap and write it in the box.

Obesity

While "fat" is a subjective word, obesity is specific –and dangerous. According 1) _____ a report by the Royal College of Physicians, eight percent of the population are obese-that is, they weigh at least 20 per cent more 2) _____ the recommended upper limit for their height and frame on weight charts, and are at higher risk of many illnesses.

3) _____ you are severely overweight, you run twice the usual risk of suffering heart disease, as fatty deposits from a diet too rich in saturated fats can clog up arteries 4) _____impede the flow of oxygen to the heart. Clogged arteries also disrupt the flow of blood to the brain 5) _____ can lead to strokes.

Other problems include tooth decay (very overweight people tend to eat more sugar), gallstones (more commonly found in those who have high levels of fat in their blood) and diabetes (6) _____ by more glucose in the blood than the body can deal with)

Excess weight, regardless of what you ate to get it can create its own complications. Even if your diet isn't heavy on fat, just being very overweight can still stress your heart 7) _____ and lead to high blood pressure.

Very overweight people, especially 8) _____ women, are susceptible to varicose veins, and to arthritis because of the permanent extra strain on ligaments and joints. They are more accident prone 9) _____ poorer balance and, should they ever need surgery, they are more at risk from the hazards of general anaesthetic. Severely overweight women 10) _____ also find that they have problems when giving birth.

Adapted from *Mode 3-Workbook (Nelson)*

1. ___	A. To	B. for	C. in	D. on
2. ___	A. less	B. than	C. more	D. that
3. ___	A. Unless	B. Even	C. If not	D. If
4. ___	A. who	B. which	C. whom	D. where
5. ___	A. and	B. but	C. so	D. as
6. ___	A. causing	B. causes	C. caused	D. had caused
7. ___	A. too many	B. few	C. too much	D. a few
8. ___	A. the	B. -	C. An	D. a
9. ___	A. because	B. because of	C. due	D. for
10. ___	A. ought	B. can't	C. may not	D. [illegible]

AMPLE TEST

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Children in prison

William Mobedi, 11, (1) _____ (arrest) by the South African police two years ago. His front teeth were knocked out and then he was locked up in a mortuary, a prison cell and another dark room for two months. Why? Because someone saw him while he (2) _____(burn) cars and shops. Eventually, William was released, but there are thousands of other black youngsters in South Africa jails.

This may be because they (3) _____(involve) in protesting about the apartheid system there, which organizes society along racist lines so that power(4) _____ (keep) in the hands of the white minority.

Not in South Africa but in many countries, if people disagree with their government they are too frightened to say anything. Those that do (5) _____ (end up) in prison, tortured or dead.

Since 1961 Amnesty International, a human rights group, (6) _____(work) to stop governments being able to imprison people for their point of view.

Recently Amnesty highlighted the plight of Palestinian children in the occupied areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who (7) _____ (be) often the victims of the violence of Israeli soldiers.

Some of the children end up in prison, where Amnesty fears many are tortured.

A record of cases where people are treated unjustly is kept by Amnesty and by publicizing the cases and putting pressure, often by (8) _____ (send) letters, on governments, decision-makers and politicians, they hope (9) _____ (stop) the injustice. This simple approach has worked many times.

One former prisoner of the Dominican Republic told how after thousands of letters arrived from Amnesty members, the President released him.

Those that (10) _____(like) to join or find out more about the organization can visit their website.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. "I'll pay off my debts next month," he says. **PROMISES**

He _____ month.

2. If your son doesn't practise, he may fail his driving test. **UNLESS**

_____ pass his driving test.

3. I'm sure she isn't a vegan. **BE**

She _____ a vegan.

4. That politician wrote a book and it became popular. **WHOSE**

That is _____ became popular.

5. My TEACHER is HAPPY TO LEARN NEW FRENCH WORDS **KEEN**

MY TEACHER _____

6. I don't have permission to drive **ALLOWED**

I _____

7. "Do you live in the same street as your parents?" my boyfriend asked me. **WANTED**

My boyfriend _____ parents.

8. I ASKED someone to repair my tennis racket before the match. **HAD**

I _____ before the match.

9. I forgot my passport because I didn't make a packing list. **WOULD**

If I _____ my passport.

10. When I lived in the country, I never walked through the flowery fields. **USE**

When I lived in the country, I _____ through the flowery fields.

LIVEWORKSHEETS