DAILY Warm-Up 11

Name _____ Date _____

THE RIVER OTTER

What animal has a sleek, furry body and swims in the river? That would be the river otter. The thick, dense fur helps the otter keep warm in the cold water. The river otter is a type of weasel. The river otter can be found in lakes, rivers, streams, marshes, and ponds. They are found predominantly in Canada and the United States. The river otter is an endangered animal because hunters desire their furry skins.

River otters are nocturnal animals, which means they do most of their activities at night. They hunt and fish at night and sleep during the day. River otters live in dens dug under the ground. They usually take over old dens from other animals, such as beavers. The bear, coyote, and the bald eagle are all predators of the river otter.

The river otter is a carnivore, which means that it eats meat. Its diet consists of crustaceans, fish, small mammals, birds, insects, and amphibians. Sea otters have a very strong sense of smell. They also use their whiskers to help them find food. Like sea otters, river otters are also known for their ability to play. They can do somersaults, sliding, wrestling, and even belly flops. They love to slide down a muddy or snowy hill. River otters use their webbed feet to swim around in the water, and they can stay underwater for up to four minutes.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following statements is <u>not</u> true about the river otter?
   a. The river otter's fur helps it withstand the extreme temperatures of the water.
   b. The webbed feet help the river otter swim in the water.
   c. The river otter lays its eggs along the riverbank.
   d. The river otter uses its whiskers to locate prey.
2. The word *predator* used in this passage means . . .
   a. similar.
   b. hunter.
   c. amicable.
   d. carnivore.
3. Which of the following is <u>not</u> a benefit of thick, dense fur?
   a. It prevents the river otter from getting cold.
   b. It helps the otter move quickly.
   c. It stores food.
   d. It serves as protection.
4. A synonym for *dense* as used in the first paragraph is . . .
   a. heavy.
   b. transparent.
   c. bristle.
   d. endangered.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

DAILY Warm-Up 12

Name _____ Date _____

THE COTTONTAIL RABBIT

The cottontail rabbit gets its name because its tail looks like a ball of cotton. The color of the cottontail rabbit is reddish brown with a white tail. The adult grows to be about 12 to 18 inches long and weighs anywhere from two to four pounds. The cottontail rabbit likes to live in the brush in order to hide. It makes its home in a burrow near prickly bushes. This rabbit is unaffected by the prickly bushes, but living near these prickly bushes deters some predators from attacking the rabbit. Coyotes, red foxes, hawks, and owls are all predators of the cottontail rabbit.

A cottontail will have multiple litters of babies each year. It is not uncommon for a rabbit to have many babies. The babies are born without fur and they cannot see. After about a week, the fur begins to grow in. The mother rabbit builds a nest out of grass, fur, and hay to keep the babies warm.

This rabbit is an herbivore, eating grass, bark, berries, twigs, and just about anything that is green. If a cottontail is lucky enough to come across a farmer's garden, it will eat just about any vegetables growing. They especially like carrots, potatoes, and tomatoes.

Famous stories have been written about cottontail rabbits. Perhaps you've heard one about Peter and his sisters Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cottontail.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. When do you think a cottontail rabbit would leave its home in the brush?
   a. to seek food
   b. to seek safety
   c. to chase away its enemy
   d. to seek protection
2. Which of the following statements is true?
   a. The cottontail rabbit does not jump very well.
   b. The cottontail rabbit is a carnivore.
   c. Most of the animals that eat rabbit eat the red fox, as well.
   d. Cottontail rabbits have a tail like a ball of cotton.
3. In this passage, the word *unaffected* means . . .
   a. unchanged.
   b. unharmed.
   c. killed instantly.
   d. unchallenged.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

DAILY Warm-Up 13

Name _____ Date _____

THE RED FOX

The red fox is a rusty red color with a whitish color on the belly. This animal is about the same size as a dog. The ears on a red fox are prominent, which make it look much different than a dog. The tail is bushy with a white tip. Other color varieties of the red fox also occur, including black, silver, and a cross phase in which a dark area crosses over the shoulders and down the middle of the back. The red fox prefers to roam where there is a marsh and field or along the edge of the forest. It can also be found on farmland, prairies, and in woodlands. The red fox thrives in British Columbia.

The red fox has a great sense of smell, hearing, and sight. This makes it a great predator. It can track and catch prey quickly and easily. The fox is an omnivore, which means it eats both meat and plants. The fox feeds on berries, grasses, apples, birds, small animals, insects, and corn. The enemies of the red fox are the coyote, the lynx, and humans. Humans are sometimes quick to kill a fox if it is seen on their property.

The red fox grows to be about three-and-a-half feet long and weighs between 10 and 15 pounds. It has long legs and it has a body built for speed. It has a long nose, erect ears, and narrow eyes. The red fox is most active at night. It may spend more time awake during the day in the winter because food is scarce then.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. A likely reason people might think the red fox is cunning and crafty is because of its . . .
   a. ability to run fast.
   b. big size.
   c. smell.
   d. look.
2. Another word for *prey* is . . .
   a. prayer.
   b. characteristic.
   c. victim.
   d. diet.
3. Which of the following would be the most accurate description of the red fox's diet?
   a. vegetables and corn
   b. berries, grasses, apples, birds, small animals, insects, and corn
   c. small animals, insects, and corn
   d. berries, grasses, apples, birds, coyotes, insects, and corn
4. The red fox has keen senses of . . .
   a. taste, smell, and hearing.
   b. hearing, sight, and touch.
   c. sight, hearing, and smell.
   d. smell, sight, and taste.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

DAILY Warm-Up 14

Name _____ Date _____

THE CRAB SPIDER

The crab spider is an interesting spider. It matches the color of the flower it lives on. This helps it stay camouflaged and hide from other insects. It takes this spider three days to change colors to match its environment. The crab spider pounces on any unsuspecting insects as soon as they land on the flower it's on. The spider bites the insects with its fangs and paralyzes them. The crab spider sucks up all the body fluids and leaves an empty husk.

Crab spiders do not spin webs. They spin fluffy silk cocoons to protect their eggs. The female spider can lay up to 20 to 30 eggs at a time. The spiderlings climb out of the cocoon after they shed their skin. Crab spiders live for one year.

The crab spider's body is divided into two parts with a narrow waist in the middle. The front legs are longer and thicker than the other legs so that they can hold their prey. They have a huge abdomen with simple black eyes that don't see very well. The spider gets its name because it walks sideways like a crab. This spider spends most of its time crouched in tree trunks, flowers, or leaves.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. How did the crab spider get its name?
   a. from its spotted back
   b. from the sound it makes
   c. from the way it walks
   d. from the manner in which it eats
2. What is the meaning of the word *pounced* as used in this passage?
   a. swooped
   b. leaped
   c. jumped
   d. attacked suddenly
3. How is the crab spider different from other spiders?
   a. It fights gravity.
   b. It emits a powerful force on its prey.
   c. It emits an odor in defense.
   d. It lives on a flower instead of a web.
4. Which of the following statements about the crab spider is true?
   a. The crab spider eats other spiders.
   b. The crab spider takes three days to change color.
   c. The crab spider spins a very sticky web.
   d. The body of the crab spider is divided into three parts.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

DAILY Warm-Up 15

Name _____ Date _____

HARVEST MICE

Harvest mice are graceful animals. They climb from one plant to another with great ease. Each resembles a monkey swinging on the branches of a tree through the forest. These mice scamper through the forest looking for food. They feed on seeds and insects. They have to eat a lot of food in the summertime so that they can store enough food energy as fat for the winter months. This is necessary so they can stay in shelter from the cold. In the winter, the harvest mouse leaves the nest only during the warmest hours of the day.

The harvest mouse has a very long tail. The tail is helpful and works a lot like another hand or foot. It grabs onto the grass and supports the mouse. It also helps the mouse hang upside down and balance itself when it climbs upwards.

Harvest mice are some of the smallest mice in the world. An adult male harvest mouse weighs less than one-third of an ounce and measures no more than six inches—and that includes the tail! Harvest mice make a shrieking sound, and some of their noises are too high-pitched for humans to hear. These shrieks are usually a sign of distress.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. Why does the author say that harvest mice are graceful animals?
   a. Harvest mice make a shrieking sound.
   b. The harvest mouse has a very long tail.
   c. They climb from one plant to another with ease.
   d. They have to eat a lot of food in the summertime.
2. What is the topic of the second paragraph?
   a. the diet of the harvest mouse
   b. the enemies of the harvest mouse
   c. the color of the harvest mouse
   d. the tail of the harvest mouse
3. What is the meaning of the word *scamper* as used in the first paragraph?
   a. settle
   b. jump
   c. retrieve
   d. scurry
4. Which paragraph explains the noises a harvest mouse makes?
   a. first
   b. second
   c. third
   d. not in the passage

LIVEWORKSHEETS