



Name _____ Date _____

SQUIRRELS

Squirrels are exciting. In the summer, they run around right after the sun comes up. In the afternoon, the squirrels go back to their nests. They take naps. Two hours before the sun goes down, they get up and run around again. When it is dark outside at night, they stay inside their nests.

Squirrels are busiest of all in the wintertime. They run fast. They make turns in the air. Squirrels jump from tree branch to tree branch. They run all morning until lunch. After lunch, they go back to their nests to rest again. When the weather is bad, they do not leave their nests. However, they do not hibernate, or sleep all winter.

Squirrels have eyes on the top of their heads. These eyes help them to see objects without having to turn their heads. These eyes are difficult, too. They make it hard for the squirrel when it is eating. The squirrel's eyes are busy watching for enemies or danger. They do not pay attention to what they are eating because they are so busy watching for danger.

Male squirrels keep themselves very clean. The male squirrel cleans himself more times than the female squirrel. He keeps cleaning himself all day long.

Be careful when you play in the park. Squirrels are beautiful to watch, but they are not safe to touch. If you try and feed one from your hand, you could get bitten. Enjoy them from a distance.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. In which season is the squirrel most active?
 - a. summer
 - b. winter
 - c. fall
 - d. spring
2. Using the context clues in the passage, the word *enemies* most likely means ...
 - a. friends.
 - b. boys.
 - c. threats.
 - d. girls
3. The author's purpose for this passage is ...
 - a. to entertain.
 - b. to inform.
 - c. to tell you what a squirrel feels like.
 - d. to persuade.
4. According to this passage, what would be the danger of hand feeding a squirrel?
 - a. You could attract other squirrels.
 - b. You could contract a disease.
 - c. You will have to take him home.
 - d. You might get bitten.



Name _____

Date _____

SPARROWS

House sparrows are often seen in a neighborhood in the city. They like to live where there are a lot of people. They do not like to live in the country.

The female looks like she is wearing a brown cap on her head. Black streaks run down her brown back.

Male house sparrows look like they are wearing gray caps on their heads. They have a black bib under their chin, just like a baby. They have a rusty brown body. Black streaks run down the back of the male house sparrow.

Vacant lots which have dried plants or tree limbs are the perfect place for house sparrows. They love to build their nests in old trees or in empty corners. House sparrows nibble seeds that they find in the weeds or grass.

They may make nests with string or paper. These little birds pull and tear the paper. They weave it in with sticks. They love to stop and eat food out of bird feeders that hang on balconies. House sparrows will also take baths in birdbaths that people put out in front of their apartments or buildings.

Keep your eyes peeled if you live in the city. Chances are, you might see a house sparrow parading past!

STORY QUESTIONS

1. What is the main idea of this passage?
 - a. to teach you how house sparrows eat
 - b. to teach you the life span of a house sparrow
 - c. to teach you to identify a sparrow in the city
 - d. to teach you how to keep house like a sparrow
2. Where do house sparrows **NOT** live?
 - a. in vacant lots
 - b. in the city
 - c. in nests made in dried plants
 - d. in the country
3. The author's purpose for this passage is . . .
 - a. to inform.
 - b. to persuade.
 - c. to entertain.
 - d. to make you sad.
4. In the text above, "keep your eyes peeled" means . . .
 - a. watch carefully.
 - b. make sure you wear make-up on your eyes.
 - c. use a potato peeler.
 - d. pay attention on rainy days.



Name _____ Date _____

HUMMINGBIRDS

Hummingbirds are amazing birds for many reasons. They fly like helicopters: backwards or floating in the air. They move from side to side. The hummingbirds zoom straight up into the sky or dive straight down. They spin their wings in circles. If their babies are in danger, they will even attack eagles. To build nests, they will pick fuzz off your sweater.

When they are awake, hummingbirds spend most of their day eating food. Hummingbirds are always on a quest for insects to eat. They need them for protein. Hummingbirds are always looking for objects from which to drink juice. They fly into brightly-colored objects that they think are food. Sometimes they even try to get juice from stop signs! They also drink nectar from flowers. Every day they visit up to 1,000 flowers to drink the juice!

Hummingbirds have special tongues. The fronts of their tongues are split in half. They have sharp edges. These edges help soak up juice from flowers. Their tongues lick flowers. As they hunt for insects, this tongue grabs the bugs and insects quickly.

Tongues, flying, and eating habits are just three of the things that make the hummingbird an unbelievable creature.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. According to the passage, what is one reason why hummingbirds are amazing?
 - a. They make a great deal of noise.
 - b. They are very small and delicate.
 - c. They can fly like a helicopter.
 - d. They can drink water.
2. In the text, "a quest for insects" means . . .
 - a. questions about.
 - b. ability.
 - c. journey.
 - d. search.
3. The author's purpose for this passage is to . . .
 - a. entertain the reader with interesting hummingbird characteristics.
 - b. inform the reader about dangerous hummingbirds.
 - c. persuade the reader to purchase a hummingbird.
 - d. encourage the reader to keep insects in their garden.
4. Which group of words best describes a hummingbird?
 - a. never moves
 - b. constantly moving
 - c. extremely slow
 - d. enjoys meat and vegetables



Name _____

Date _____

CAT MYTHS

People believe things about cats that might not be true. These “myths” can confuse cat owners. If you like cats, learn the facts and fiction about them.

Some people think that cats need to drink milk. That is not true. If a cat eats a good diet, it does not need to drink milk. Does your cat drink milk? Most cats like milk, but it can make them sick. Cats should only have milk in small amounts.

Have you heard the one about garlic? People put garlic on cat food. They believe it will get rid of worms in the cat’s body. Does it work? Garlic makes food taste richer. Garlic does nothing to worms. It will give the cat bad breath! If your cat has worms, take it to an animal doctor. A veterinarian can give medicine to the cat. The medicine will take care of the worms.

Some people think that cats’ whiskers help them to balance. Whiskers serve as “feelers.” They do nothing at all for balance. “Feelers” help the cat know about its surroundings.

Have you heard these myths before? Do not believe them. Learn how to care for cats. Read books and talk to your veterinarian. Cats need good owners to care for them.



STORY QUESTIONS

1. According to the passage, what is the meaning of “if a cat eats a good diet”?
 - a. getting the treats it deserves
 - b. getting the right kind and amount of food to make them healthy
 - c. getting the right kind of love and attention
 - d. getting your neighbor to feed your cat while you are on vacation
2. “Cat Myths” is mostly about. . .
 - a. creating a positive atmosphere for your cat.
 - b. stories that are true about cats.
 - c. stories that are not true about cats.
 - d. making sure you have dinner in time for your cat.
3. A new title for this passage might be . . .

a. “The Truth About Cats.”	c. “Blame It on the Cat.”
b. “A Cat’s Life.”	d. “Safety for Cats.”
4. When someone tells you new information about any topic, you should always . . .
 - a. read a book that gives you advice on friendship.
 - b. watch a TV show about chickens.
 - c. search the Internet for video games about cats.
 - d. check to see if the information is correct.



Name _____ Date _____

RATS

If you want to keep rats out of your house, there are a number of important things to remember.

First, pet food and pet dishes should be removed. When your pet is finished eating, take the dish away. Pet dishes that are outside attract rats. If you have to leave pet dishes outside, make sure they are properly sanitized.

Second, all trash should be put inside trashcans. Metal and heavy plastic cans are good places for trash. Make sure to close the lid. Trash should never be left in the yard. Remember to pick it up right away. Put it in the can and close the lid tightly. Trash blowing around the yard will bring unwanted furry creatures to visit.

Keep bird feeders on raised stands. Rats can eat birdseed that is close to the ground. Also, pile up any pieces of wood. Wood that is stacked will keep rats from building a nest. It should be stacked at least 18 inches above the ground. Put away pipes. These are places for rats to crawl in and out of and where they may build nests.

Last, keep windows closed tightly. Make sure windowpanes are unbroken. Rats love to crawl in cracked, broken windows. If they get in, it is hard to get them out. They will dig through everything and get into anything.

Your neighborhood can be rat free if you just follow these simple steps.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. What is this passage teaching us?
 - a. how to keep rats out of our yard and homes if we live in a neighborhood
 - b. how to keep rats out of our yard and homes if we live in a foreign country
 - c. how to keep rats out of our yard and homes if we live on the moon
 - d. how to keep rats out of our yard and homes if we live in Texas
2. Why is it important to take the pet dish inside when your pet is finished eating?
 - a. Pet food spoils and smells.
 - b. The dish could break outside.
 - c. It isn't important.
 - d. Rats will come to eat pet food.
3. In the text, "properly sanitized" means . . .
 - a. organized.
 - b. paid for.
 - c. cleaned.
 - d. dirty.
4. What information could be added to the text above?
 - a. Bird feeders may be placed on the ground.
 - b. Remove all cans or pet bowls that may catch the rain. Rats drink rainwater.
 - c. Leave yards full of rubbish and garbage piles.
 - d. Cracked or broken windows should not be replaced for two months.



Name _____

Date _____

ANTS

Ants are incredible creatures. Each colony has its own smell. Each of the ants in the colony knows the smell. Enemies will not be able to enter their camp without being discovered. Several types of ants have a sting to protect their nest when intruders turn up.

The queen ant is the only one who can lay eggs for the colony. None of the other ants can lay eggs at all.

The worker ants cannot lay eggs. They take care of newborn baby ants. They also search for food. These worker ants protect their nest from enemies. They also keep the nest spick and span. They take out the “trash” from the nest and place it in one area.

Slave-maker ants rob the nest of other ants. They steal the pupae, the cases that hold the ant eggs. Then they bring the pupae back to their camp. When the stolen cases hatch, these stolen ants become slaves.

Finally, all ants have antennas and jaws. They need antennas for smelling and touching. They have strong, long jaws. They open and shut sideways like pairs of scissors. Adult ants cannot chew and swallow food, so they squeeze the food until the juice comes out. They swallow the juice and throw away the leftover dried parts of the food.

Ant colonies must have worker ants and slave-maker ants. They must also have a queen ant to lay eggs. They must have a way to catch other ants that try to get into their nest. Without a queen to lay eggs, or antennas to hear and touch, and jaws to tear food, there would be no ant colonies left in the world.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. According to the text, what are *pupae*?
 - a. the cases that hold the ant eggs
 - b. baby ants
 - c. adult ants
 - d. worker ants
2. Using the context above, another word for *intruders* would be . . .
 - a. unwanted friends.
 - b. unwanted vacationers.
 - c. unwanted enemies.
 - d. unwanted slaves.
3. This passage is about . . .
 - a. ants going to war.
 - b. unusual qualities of the ant.
 - c. ants and their hobbies.
 - d. how ants take out the trash.
4. Which words could be used instead of “spick and span” in the text above?
 - a. sluggish and lazy
 - b. dirty and piggish
 - c. disgusting and awful
 - d. clean and neat



Name _____ Date _____

CROWS

Crows can be a problem for farmers. They eat crops and bother farm workers. But they also do things that help farmers. Crows eat weeds, grasshoppers, wireworms, and cutworms. When crows eat these bugs and weeds, they help the farmer!

Crows are easy to spot. Most crows are black. Some are black with white, brown, or gray. Crows have black beaks and black legs. They are usually between 8 and 12 inches (20 to 30 cm) long. Their wings are between 16 and 24 inches (40 to 60 cm) wide.

Crows can be friendly with other crows. Adults enjoy being together. In the fall, crows fly south to warm weather. This is called migrating. When they migrate, they fly with many other crows.

Crows build nests in trees, bushes, or on the tops of buildings. They make their nests by weaving twigs together like a mat. Crows use roots, grasses, and bark from the trees to put inside of the nest. This makes the nest soft for the baby crows.

The female crow lays between four and seven eggs. They are blue-green in color. The male crow sits on the eggs. He helps to keep them warm until they hatch. When crows have babies, they like to be alone. After the babies are older, the crows will mix with other crows again.

How can you keep crows away from places? Some people make scarecrows to frighten them away. The scarecrows are made to look like people. They blow in the wind to look like people are moving. Scarecrows left to stand in one place will not work. The crows think of them as a place to land or sit. Crows are quick-witted. They can tell when a trap has been set.

Some people dislike crows. Others like the black, shiny birds.

STORY QUESTIONS

- In the passage, *migrate* means . . .
 - flying to Florida.
 - flying to Alaska.
 - flying south for warm weather.
 - flying north for warm weather.
- The words "quick-witted" could be changed to . . .
 - speedy flyers.
 - slow thinkers.
 - fast thinkers.
 - quick artists.
- The author's purpose for writing this passage is . . .
 - to persuade the reader to look at crows in a new way.
 - to inform the reader about building a nest.
 - to entertain the reader with jokes about crows.
 - to warn the reader about dangerous birds.
- According to this passage, how do crows help farmers?
 - They are intelligent and quick-witted.
 - They know that scarecrows cannot harm them.
 - They build large, bulky nests.
 - They eat weeds and bugs.



Name _____

Date _____

HORSES

Did you know horses are in the same family as donkeys, zebras, and mules? It is true. Horses are in the equus family. Their name comes from a Greek word. It means quick.

There are over 350 kinds of horses. They are divided into four main groups: the "light" horses, the "heavy" horses, ponies, and wild or semi-wild horses.

"Light" horses have small bones. They weigh less than 1,300 pounds (590 kg). They have thin legs.

"Heavy" horses are strong and have big bones. They also have sturdy legs. "Heavy horses" can weigh up to 2,000 pounds (907 kg).

Ponies are no taller than 58 inches (147 cm). If you measure in horse language, one would measure in hands. Ponies, then, are no more than 14 ½ hands tall.

Wild or semi-wild horses have not been tamed. These horses do not live with people. They live in the open fields and run free.

A person can tell the age of a horse by checking its teeth. Its age can only be checked by its teeth before it is ten years old.

All horses have small stomachs. They must eat small amounts of food throughout the day. All horses love to eat short, juicy grass. Horses that live outside will nibble grass all day. If they live in a stable, they will munch on hay as often as it is given to them. If they are workhorses, they will eat better if the person feeding them gives them maize (corn), oats, or barley. It can be added to their regular food. They also enjoy treats.

All horses love to run, canter, gallop, walk, or trot.

STORY QUESTIONS

- How many main groups of horses are there?
a. 5 b. 340 c. 4 d. 350
- Which animals are related to the horse?
a. mules, donkeys, and zebras c. donkeys, zebras, and chickens
b. mules, zebras, and cows d. zebras, alligators, cows
- What do all of the horses have in common?
a. They all eat hay from the stables.
b. They have small stomachs and eat throughout the day.
c. They all weigh more than 1,300 pounds.
d. They all have teeth that are 10 years old.
- Which of these is **NOT** a fact about horses from the passage?
a. "Heavy" horses weigh more than "light" horses.
b. Horses belong to the equus family.
c. They all live to be 25 years or older.
d. Horses love short, juicy grass.



Name _____ Date _____

INTERESTING BIRD

Do you like to walk through the park early in the morning? If you do, you might see an interesting bird. It has black and white marks on its face. It has a black and white tail.

This bird might pretend to make the sound of a hawk. It might steal wasp eggs from a wasp nest. It might bury an acorn in the ground. It might nibble on acorns or nuts. It might gobble seeds found on the ground.

You could see it chasing grasshoppers, caterpillars, lizards, frogs, or other small animals. If you are lucky, you might see this bird catching an insect as it flies in the air. Zip! Zap! Goodbye, bug!

During your walk, this bird might be sitting on the trees or shrubs. This bird could be running to and fro on the ground.

Its blue-green spotted eggs will be hidden in its nest. If you see the nest, you will see twigs, little pieces of bark, leaves, and trash. The nest will probably be hidden in a corner of a building. It might be in an old, broken crate. Or finally, it might be hidden as high as thirty feet up in a tree.

What is the mystery bird? Take a walk in the park. You might see the blue jay!

STORY QUESTIONS

- From this passage, we can conclude that the blue jay is . . .
 - a very busy bird.
 - a lazy bird.
 - an angry bird.
 - a bird with a schedule.
- In this passage, the author describes . . .
 - the states where blue jays live.
 - how the baby birds learn to fly.
 - blue jays taking a bath.
 - the blue jay's nest.
- The author's purpose for this passage is . . .
 - to entertain the reader with the tricks blue jays play on people.
 - to inform the reader so they can identify the blue jay.
 - to persuade the reader to go to the park in search of crows.
 - to help the reader build a birdhouse.
- If you wished to locate more information on the blue jay, which resource would be useful?
 - a TV show on birds of the Amazon rainforest
 - a pamphlet on urban (city) birds
 - a book about whales
 - a radio show on animals of the sea



Name _____

Date _____

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.

STORY QUESTIONS

- What is the name of the author's little brother?
a. Tim b. Honey c. Mom d. Sam
- The story "Ducks" is mostly about a . . .
a. boy's journey to save two ducks. c. mother's love for animals.
b. person's adventure with two ducks. d. family's adventure with ducks on vacation.
- 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.
- 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.



Name _____ Date _____

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!

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.

STORY QUESTIONS

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.



Name _____

Date _____

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.

STORY QUESTIONS

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.
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



Name _____ Date _____

PIGS

Pigs are misunderstood. Some people think of them as lazy and stupid. Did you know that pigs are very smart? Pigs are smarter than most pets and wild animals. Experts claim that pigs are easier to train than dogs and cats. Would you want a pig for a pet?

Keeping a pet pig is fun, but it is work. Pigs like to go for walks like a dog. Would you like to walk a pig down your street? They can be trained to do tricks, and they like to be petted. They usually get along with other pets.

Pet pigs must be kept on a diet. They like to eat like hogs! An adult pet pot-bellied pig should not weigh more than 150 pounds. But many weigh up to 300 pounds due to overfeeding.

Do you sweat like a pig? Real pigs don't sweat. They cool their bodies by rolling in mud. Yet, pigs are some of the cleanest animals on the earth. Pigs can learn to use a litter box like a cat. They can be housetrained. Many live in houses and apartments. But they can get in the way.

Pigs have a keen sense of smell. They help find truffles in the forests. These mushroom-like plants sell for high prices. So the pigs are valued for their work.

In addition to ham, bacon, and pork, pigs provide us with many useful products. Pig hair is used to make hairbrushes and furniture. Drugs and medical procedures use pig parts to help sick people.

Pigs are found in every part of the world. They serve many useful purposes. Some pigs even dig holes for plant seeds to fall into and grow. Pigs may have been the world's first farmers!

STORY QUESTIONS

1. According to the text, pigs make good pets because ...
 - a. they like to watch television.
 - b. you can ride a pig.
 - c. they are smart and clean companions.
 - d. they chase cats.
2. Pigs are found ...

a. throughout the entire world.	c. on tropical islands.
b. throughout Europe.	d. in America and Australia.
3. Pet pot-bellied pigs should not weigh more than ...

a. 300 pounds.	c. 50 pounds.
b. 150 pounds.	d. 500 pounds.
4. The author's purpose for writing this passage is ...
 - a. to entertain the reader with pig tales.
 - b. to persuade the reader to buy pig products.
 - c. to persuade the reader to get a pet pig.
 - d. to inform the reader about the many qualities of pigs.



Name _____

Date _____

HERDING DOGS

Did you know that herding dogs come in many shapes and sizes? Some are tall. Some are short. Some are lean, and some are stocky. The shortest herding dogs are Welsh corgis. These little dogs were bred to herd cattle. Their short legs move quickly when they run around the herd, and their short, little bodies can avoid a kick from an angry cow.

Most herding dogs are medium-sized. The border collie is famous for its intelligence. These dogs are active and always moving. They look for cues from the shepherd, and they work as a team. Border collies could almost work alone. They know what to do if a sheep strays.

Large dogs, like German shepherds and Belgian sheepdogs, work many jobs. They can herd, but more often they work with police, guide the blind, or provide protection to families.

Herding dogs are also trained for search and rescue work. Any time there is a disaster, you will see teams of dogs working to find missing people. Herding dogs are some of the best workers, because they are strong and determined.

Today, most dogs don't work in the jobs they were bred to do. People love them as pets. However, if given a chance, a herding dog might try to round up, or herd, the entire family. The desire to round up the group is in its blood.

STORY QUESTIONS

- Which breed is the shortest herding dog?
 - Shetland sheepdog
 - Welsh corgi
 - puli
 - collie
- The border collie is a good pet for someone who ...
 - likes to lounge on the couch all evening.
 - doesn't have a backyard.
 - is active and enjoys taking the dog on long walks.
 - worries about dog hair on the sofa.
- How has the job of the herding dog changed over the years?
 - All are trained as search and rescue dogs.
 - Some owners take their dogs to the beach.
 - Some have become pets and are no longer trained to perform traditional jobs.
 - They make great babysitters.
- Which job would **NOT** be good for a herding dog?
 - retrieving ducks from a pond
 - working with a police officer
 - locating a lost hiker in the mountains
 - rounding up a herd of cattle



Name _____ Date _____

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.

STORY QUESTIONS

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.



Name _____

Date _____

GOATS

Would you like a goat for a pet? Think about several things before you answer. Make sure you know the facts about any pet before you take it home.

Do you think of goats as farm animals? Goats give milk, wool, and other products. They are valuable farm animals. But they can be great pets, too.

Think of goats in petting zoos. They are friendly and curious. People like to pet the goats and watch them play. Pet goats are liked for the same reasons. Some breeds, such as the dwarf or pygmy goats, are small enough to keep in a house with a yard. But goats have some special needs.

Goats are herd animals, so they like to live in groups. A pair of goats would please the right family. Goats can also live with horses. Rural areas are best suited for keeping goats. Goats need your time and attention. They need medical care.

Goats love you to brush their coats. They love when you touch their ears. A goat has sharp teeth, so remember to keep your hands out of its mouth. A vet must trim your goat's hooves.

A female goat is called a nanny goat. It is also called a doe. A male goat is called a billy goat. He is also called a buck. The baby goat is called a kid.

Goats are picky eaters. Goats love molasses, carrots, and seaweed meal. These are very good for them. Crushed oats, pony pellets, bran, chaff, horse mix, Lucerne hay, and crushed oats are also foods they that they will enjoy eating. Goats love to eat fresh roots from young trees most of all.

If you want to keep a goat for a pet, prepare for its needs. Then your goat will be happy and so will you.

STORY QUESTIONS

- Which statement is **TRUE**?
 - Goats do not need other animals.
 - Goats have dull teeth.
 - A female goat is called a kid.
 - Goats can give milk.
- Goats like to be in groups because . . .
 - they are herd animals.
 - they like the heat.
 - they cannot see.
 - they get lost easily.
- The author's purpose for this passage is . . .
 - to entertain the reader with a goat story.
 - to inform the reader about goat tricks.
 - to inform the reader about goat facts, in case they wish to purchase one for a pet.
 - to persuade the reader to start a goat farm.
- What is something you should **NOT** do if you have goat for a pet?
 - Feed it pony pellets.
 - Brush it.
 - Put your hand in its mouth.
 - Feed it carrots.



Name _____ Date _____

GEESE

Geese fly south for the winter. They fly as a group, in a V shape. This shape is called a formation. Why do they fly in formations?

As each bird flaps its wings, the wind it makes lifts the bird that follows behind. The geese gather lift from one another. This helps the geese travel faster. They work as a team.

If one of the geese falls out of the V, it will feel the pull from flying alone. It will want to come right back to the V.

The goose that is in the front of the V will drop to the back when it gets tired. Another goose takes over leading the birds. The geese behind the leader make honking noises. The noise encourages the lead birds as they fly along. The honking makes the birds keep up the speed. By honking, birds tell each other, "Good job. Keep it up!"

If a goose gets injured or sick, it falls out of the V. Two other geese from the group follow it down to the ground. They help or protect the bird. These two geese stay with the bird until it dies or is able to fly again. If the bird dies, they wait for another flock and join in their V. If the bird gets better, they all join.

People can learn a lot from geese. We can work together to get jobs done. We can take turns being the leader. When someone is having a hard time, we can help. We can let others know when they are doing a good job. If we acted like the geese, wouldn't our world be a happy place?

STORY QUESTIONS

1. Why do the geese fly in a V formation?
 - a. They can get where they are going faster and with less effort.
 - b. They can have a better view of the world from the formation.
 - c. They can travel in larger circles in a V formation.
 - d. They will be able to head to vacation more quickly.
2. Which statement is **FALSE**?
 - a. Geese change places when they are tired from flying in front.
 - b. Geese fly in formation.
 - c. Geese do not help wounded or dying geese.
 - d. Geese encourage each other by honking.
3. The author's purpose for this passage is . . .
 - a. to entertain the reader with geese tales.
 - b. to inform the reader about lessons we can learn from the examples of geese.
 - c. to persuade the reader to travel in formation with the geese.
 - d. to inform the reader how to take care of a pet goose.
4. A **synonym** for *encourages* could be . . .

a. annoys.	c. pressures.
b. bothers.	d. supports.



Name _____

Date _____

CHICKENS

Have you ever seen a city chicken? Some people enjoy keeping chickens as pets. Chickens are not cuddly like cats or friendly like dogs, but they do show affection.

A friendly chicken might hop on the back of your lawn chair. It could walk near you in the backyard. It might gently pull on your hair if you are lying on the grass. Chickens might even walk into your lap and eat food from your hand.

Before getting a pet chicken, think about its needs. Check to make sure that your city allows chickens to be kept as pets. Call your local animal shelter for information. Consider your neighbors. Would they mind if you kept chickens? Check your yard for size and escape paths. Chickens need exercise!

Gather the right supplies for chickens. A good chicken coop made of chicken wire and wood will house your pet. The coop must have a door for the chickens to pass through easily. Airtight containers keep the chicken food from getting stale or soggy. You will need clean-up supplies and nesting materials. A chicken breeder can give you a list of recommended items.

Are you ready for the responsibilities of keeping an active pet or are you “chicken”?

STORY QUESTIONS

- Which is a **synonym** for the word *coop*?
 - cop
 - boring
 - enclosure
 - rooster
- Before getting a pet chicken, you should think about . . .
 - city laws, your neighbors, and pet supplies.
 - city laws, your neighbors, and what you can do with the eggs.
 - what the neighbors know about chickens and what they like to do.
 - how chickens sunbathe and if your neighbors want eggs.
- The author's purpose for this passage is . . .
 - to entertain the reader with facts about farm chickens.
 - to inform the reader about raising chickens in a city.
 - to persuade the reader to stay away from chickens.
 - to suggest a price for eggs.
- Which could be a different title for this passage?
 - “Caring for Chicken Pox”
 - “Caring for Your Pet Chicken”
 - “Chickens Gone Wild”
 - “Playing with Chickens”