

# Verbal & Reading

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**Reading Comprehension**

The origin of dogs traces back to their wild ancestors, creatures that roamed freely without the convenience of a caretaker providing daily meals. In those early days, survival hinged on the ability to hunt for their own sustenance, a skill at which the wild dogs excelled. Yet, the unpredictability of finding food meant that hunger was a frequent companion.



Occasionally, when the wild dogs successfully captured a large prey, they faced a dilemma. Unable to consume the entire catch immediately, some clever dogs devised a solution – they began digging holes to stash away the surplus meat and bones. This innovative behavior allowed them to return later, ensuring a meal even during lean times.

The dogs exhibiting this cunning behavior thrived, living longer and passing on their resourceful instincts to their offspring. Over centuries, this practice of hiding food became ingrained in the wild dog’s way of life, evolving into a survival strategy that enhanced their chances of enduring scarcity.

As humans domesticated dogs and brought them into their homes as beloved pets, the animals retained traces of their ancestral habits. Even today, a well-fed domesticated dog might exhibit a seemingly instinctive desire to bury a bone. This seemingly simple act carries echoes of a bygone era, a tangible link to the resourcefulness

that defined the early survival tactics of wild dogs.

In the evolution from wild ancestors to cherished companions, dogs have retained a touch of their untamed roots. The act of burying a bone serves as a reminder that, deep within the domesticated canine, a small vestige of the wild spirit persists, connecting them to a time when survival demanded ingenuity and adaptability.



1. What was a crucial skill for the survival of wild dogs in their early days?
  - A) Ability to perform tricks
  - B) Hunting for sustenance
  - C) Camouflaging in the wild
  - D) Socializing with other animals
  
2. What dilemma did wild dogs face when successfully capturing a large prey?
  - A) How to cook the prey
  - B) Where to find more prey
  - C) How to hide the surplus meat and bones
  - D) Whether to share the prey with other animals

3. What innovative behavior did some clever dogs develop to address the dilemma of surplus food?
  - A) Sharing with other dogs
  - B) Building nests in trees
  - C) Digging holes to stash away the surplus food
  - D) Cooking the food before consumption
  
4. What evolutionary advantage did dogs exhibiting the cunning behavior of hiding food gain?
  - A) Better social skills
  - B) Improved sense of smell
  - C) Longer lifespan and resourceful instincts
  - D) Enhanced running speed
  
5. Why do domesticated dogs, even when well-fed, sometimes exhibit a desire to bury a bone?
  - A) To cook the bone later
  - B) Out of boredom
  - C) As an instinctive behavior from their wild ancestors
  - D) To share the bone with other dogs
  
6. What skill defined the survival of wild dogs in their early days?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. How did some clever wild dogs address the dilemma of surplus food after a successful hunt?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What advantage did dogs exhibiting the behavior of hiding food gain in terms of evolution?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. How does the act of burying a bone by domesticated dogs connect them to their wild ancestors?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. How has the act of burying a bone persisted in domesticated dogs as a tangible link to their wild ancestors, and what does it reveal about the connection between domestication and the innate instincts of dogs?

**Reading Comprehension**

Fires, both large and small, play intricate roles in the dynamics of forests, sometimes acting as destructive forces and at other times serving as essential elements for the well-being of these ecosystems.



Large fires, often devastating, can burn trees and harm animal populations, disrupting the delicate balance of a forest ecosystem. However, smaller, controlled fires can contribute to the health of a forest in several ways.

Forests, like any living system, can be susceptible to diseases that spread among trees. Small fires, often ignited by lightning, act as natural cleansers, eliminating sick and dead trees. By doing so, these fires help prevent the spread of disease and contribute to the overall vitality of the forest.

In addition to addressing tree health, small fires play a crucial role in forest regeneration. Some trees, particularly old and tall ones, can impede the growth of new vegetation by blocking sunlight. Controlled fires target these older trees, creating space for new growth, including the establishment of young trees and other plants.

Moreover, small fires serve as nature’s cleaning crew, clearing out dead branches and leaves from the forest floor. The aftermath of a fire sees the burned organic matter mixing with the soil, enriching it with nutrients. This nutrient-rich soil becomes a fertile ground for the growth of new trees and plants, fostering a cycle of renewal.

Without the presence of small fires, dead plant material can accumulate on the forest floor over time. Eventually, this buildup becomes a potential fuel source for a larger, more destructive fire. In contrast, controlled and moderate fires prevent this accumulation, minimizing the risk of uncontrollable wildfires.

The intricate dance between fires and forests illustrates the delicate balance within ecosystems, where the right kind of fire, when managed properly, contributes to the health, regeneration, and sustainability of these vital environments.

11. What role do smaller, controlled fires play in forest ecosystems?
  - A) They harm animal populations.
  - B) They disrupt the balance of the ecosystem.
  - C) They contribute to the health and regeneration of the forest.
  - D) They cause diseases to spread among trees.
  
12. How do small fires help prevent the spread of disease in forests?
  - A) By burning healthy trees
  - B) By creating space for new growth
  - C) By eliminating sick and dead trees
  - D) By blocking sunlight
  
13. What is one way controlled fires contribute to forest regeneration?
  - A) By targeting young trees for growth
  - B) By burning down the entire forest
  - C) By enriching the soil with nutrients
  - D) By preserving old and tall trees

14. What risk is minimized by the presence of controlled and moderate fires in forests?
- A) Accumulation of nutrient-rich soil
  - B) Accumulation of dead branches and leaves
  - C) Rapid growth of new vegetation
  - D) Risk of uncontrollable wildfires
15. Why is the buildup of dead plant material on the forest floor concerning?
- A) It attracts disease-spreading insects.
  - B) It impedes the growth of new vegetation.
  - C) It enhances the beauty of the forest.
  - D) It serves as a natural cleanser.
16. How do controlled fires address tree health in forests?
17. What role do small fires play in forest regeneration, particularly concerning old and tall trees?
18. How does the aftermath of a small fire contribute to the forest floor?
19. How do controlled fires act as a nature's cleaning crew in forests?
20. Considering the delicate balance discussed in the passage, what challenges might arise if controlled fires were entirely eliminated from forest management practices?

**A Journey through Nature**

**Word Bank:**

(Skim through each word below first. Underline and look up each new word before you start the exercise.)

- countries
- eddies
- identities
- losses
- potatoes
- reptiles
- surroundings
- zeros

Write the vocab word that best completes each sentence.

21. The water whirled around in the \_\_\_\_\_.
22. Rattlesnakes live in several \_\_\_\_\_ with different climates.
23. Miranda enjoyed making mashed \_\_\_\_\_ with gravy.
24. The spy had several different \_\_\_\_\_ to fool his enemies.
25. Snakes can be found at the zoo with other \_\_\_\_\_.
26. The number one million contains six \_\_\_\_\_.

27. Rattlers are more aware of their \_\_\_\_\_ than people are.

28. The team had ten wins and three \_\_\_\_\_ in the season.

**Complete the passage by using the previous word bank first, then answer the reading questions:**

**A Journey through Nature**

The group of adventurers made their way down the river, the water swirling in e\_\_\_\_\_s around the rocks as they passed. They were from different c\_\_\_\_\_s, with different i\_\_\_\_\_s and backgrounds, but they had come together to explore this wild and beautiful land.

As they floated past a field of p\_\_\_\_\_s, they marveled at the lush s\_\_\_\_\_s, feeling as though they had entered a different world. But then, out of nowhere, a group of reptiles appeared, slithering out of the brush and onto the shore.

The adventurers tried to keep their distance, but they couldn't help but feel a sense of awe and respect for these incredible creatures. As they watched the reptiles move through the water, they felt a connection to the natural world that surrounded them.

But then, just as suddenly, the reptiles disappeared, leaving the adventurers feeling a sense of loss. They realized that they were just visitors in this land, and that they could never truly understand the struggles and l\_\_\_\_\_s of the creatures that called it home.

As they continued down the river, they saw more and more animals, each with their own unique identity and purpose. And with each

passing moment, they felt more and more connected to the natural world around them, knowing that even as strangers in this land, they were a part of something much larger than themselves.

By the time they reached the end of the river, they felt as though they had come full circle, with the z\_\_\_\_\_s and ones of modern life feeling distant and meaningless compared to the raw power and beauty of the natural world. They had a newfound appreciation for the world around them, and for the r\_\_\_\_\_s and other creatures that called it home.



29. What were the adventurers exploring during their journey?
- A) A bustling city
  - B) A wild and beautiful land
  - C) An ancient castle
  - D) A deep underground cave

30. What did the adventurers encounter as they floated down the river?
- A) A field of potatoes
  - B) A group of reptiles
  - C) A desert landscape
  - D) A bustling market

31. How did the adventurers feel about the reptiles they encountered?
- A) They felt fearful and wanted to leave.
  - B) They wanted to capture the reptiles.
  - C) They felt a sense of awe and respect.
  - D) They ignored the reptiles.

32. What realization did the adventurers have when the reptiles disappeared?
- A) They felt happy and relieved.
  - B) They realized they were the rulers of the land.
  - C) They recognized they were just visitors.
  - D) They believed the reptiles would return.

33. How did the adventurers feel as they continued down the river?
- A) Disconnected from the natural world
  - B) More and more connected to the natural world
  - C) Indifferent to their surroundings
  - D) Overwhelmed by modern life

34. How did the adventurers initially react to the reptiles they encountered during their journey?

35. What realization did the adventurers have when the reptiles disappeared, and how did it affect their perspective?
36. How did the adventurers feel about the natural world as they continued down the river, and what did they gain from the experience?
37. How did the adventurers' perspective on modern life change by the end of their journey?
38. Based on the adventurers' journey and their changing perspective, what message about the connection between humans and the natural world can we infer from the passage?



# Answer Key

## Reading Comprehension

1. B
2. C
3. C
4. C
5. C
6. Hunting for sustenance was a crucial skill for the survival of wild dogs in their early days.
7. They began digging holes to stash away the surplus meat and bones, ensuring a meal during lean times.
8. Dogs exhibiting the behavior of hiding food gained a longer lifespan and passed on resourceful instincts to their offspring.
9. The act of burying a bone by domesticated dogs serves as a reminder of the resourcefulness that defined the early survival tactics of wild dogs, connecting them to their untamed roots.
10. The act of burying a bone in domesticated dogs is a behavior inherited from their wild ancestors. It reveals that, despite domestication, dogs retain traces of their ancestral habits, demonstrating a connection between domesticated dogs and their innate instincts for survival. The persistence of this behavior reflects a small vestige of the wild spirit within domesticated canines, connecting them to a time when ingenuity and adaptability were essential for survival.

## Reading Comprehension

11. C
12. C
13. C
14. D
15. B
16. Controlled fires act as natural cleansers, eliminating sick and dead trees, which helps prevent the spread of diseases.

17. Controlled fires target older trees, creating space for new growth and facilitating the establishment of young trees and other plants.
18. The burned organic matter from small fires mixes with the soil, enriching it with nutrients, creating fertile ground for the growth of new trees and plants.
19. Controlled fires clear out dead branches and leaves from the forest floor, preventing the buildup of potential fuel for larger, destructive fires.
20. Eliminating controlled fires might lead to the accumulation of dead plant material, increased risk of diseases spreading among trees, and reduced space for new growth. Ultimately, this could create conditions conducive to larger, uncontrolled wildfires, posing a threat to the overall health and sustainability of forest ecosystems.

## A Journey through Nature

21. eddies
22. countries
23. potatoes
24. identities
25. reptiles
26. zeros
27. surroundings
28. losses

## Words needed in the passage:

eddies  
countries  
identities  
potatoes  
surroundings  
losses  
zeros  
reptiles

29. B
30. B

31. C
32. C
33. B
34. The adventurers tried to keep their distance but felt a sense of awe and respect for the reptiles.
35. The adventurers realized that they were just visitors in the land, and it left them feeling a sense of loss. It shifted their perspective to recognize their place in the natural world.
36. They felt more and more connected to the natural world and gained a newfound appreciation for it. They also saw themselves as a part of something larger than themselves.
37. By the end of their journey, the adventurers viewed modern life as distant and meaningless compared to the raw power and beauty of the natural world, which they had come to appreciate.
38. We can infer that the passage conveys a message about the importance of recognizing our place as visitors in the natural world and gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation for the creatures and landscapes that call it home. It emphasizes the idea that humans are part of a larger ecosystem and should respect and connect with the natural world.