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Grade 3 Practice Test

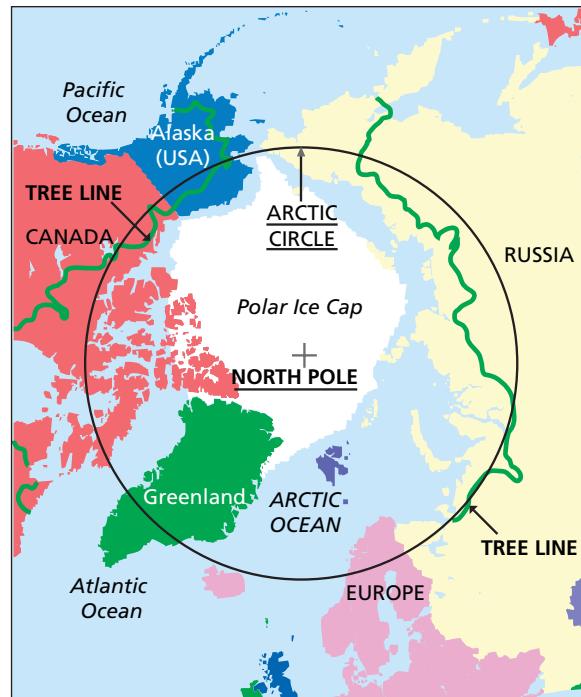
- Plight of the Polar Bear
- Giant Pandas

Today you will read two passages. Read these sources carefully to gather information to answer questions and write an essay.

Excerpt from *Plight of the Polar Bear* by Ned Jensen

Built to Survive

① Polar bears are adapted to survive the severe conditions of the Arctic. They appear to be all white, but each strand of hair is actually transparent. It has been commonly believed that this clear fur carries sunlight to the bears' black skin, where it is absorbed and changed to heat. However, studies on polar bear fur have proven that it does not transmit sunlight to a bear's skin. Since the sun is either low on the horizon or not even above the horizon during the coldest Arctic months, it wouldn't make much difference if the fur was able to transmit sunlight to the bear's skin.



- ② Polar bear fur is waterproof, so the icy waters in which they swim don't make them cold. Their white fur also helps them to blend in with the snow, making it easier for them to stalk their prey.
- ③ Polar bears' main food source is seals, but they also eat walruses, smaller whales, and some land animals. They do most of their seal hunting during the winter months when ice forms over the Arctic Ocean. By blending into the snowy landscape, a polar bear poised to pounce may not be spotted by a seal. Polar bears will wait patiently for hours near a hole in the ice where seals come up for air.
- ④ Adult polar bears need to eat a great deal of food to survive. Their bodies store fat to get them through the seasons in which they are not

hunting. They have large stomachs and will eat nearly 45 kilograms (100 lbs) in a single meal. That would be like eating 400 quarter-pound hamburgers at one time!

⑤ Two layers of fur and a thick layer of body fat insulate polar bears from extremely cold temperatures. They even have fur on the bottoms of their large paws.

⑥ Polar bears are excellent swimmers. They have been spotted hunting seals up to 80 kilometers (50 mi) out to sea. They swim with their heads above water by dog-paddling at over 9 kilometers (6 mi) per hour. These bears use their huge paws like large paddles to move through the water. A thick layer of blubber helps them remain afloat.

1. What is the most likely reason the author included the map with the text?

- (A) to show where it is coldest
- (B) to show where polar bears live
- (C) to show where the North Pole is located on Earth
- (D) to show how much of the world is covered with water

2. Part A

Which statement is a main idea from the passage “Built to Survive”?

- (A) Polar bears have body characteristics that help them live where it is very cold.
- (B) Polar bears have a thick layer of body fat.
- (C) Polar bears have two layers of fur.
- (D) Polar bears blend into the snowy landscape.

Part B

Which two details support the main idea from Part A?

- (A) Polar bears have body characteristics that help them live where it is very cold.
- (B) Polar bears have a thick layer of body fat.
- (C) Polar bears have two layers of fur.
- (D) Polar bears blend into the snowy landscape.

3. What is the main idea of paragraph 6?

- (A) Polar bears have blubber.
- (B) Polar bears hunt seals far out to sea.
- (C) Polar bears are excellent swimmers.
- (D) Polar bears use their paws like paddles.

4. Part A

Which word or phrase has the same meaning as **transparent**?

- (A) moving
- (B) icy cold
- (C) very long
- (D) see-through

Part B

Which phrase from the text helps readers understand the meaning of the word **transparent**?

- (A) this clear fur
- (B) the Arctic
- (C) bears' black skin
- (D) severe conditions

Excerpt from *Giant Pandas* by Kira Freed**Meet the Giant Panda**

- ① Giant pandas are among the most loved animals in the world. Members of the bear family, giant pandas are easily recognizable because of their thick black-and-white fur.
- ② Wild giant pandas remain in the wild in only one place on Earth—the forest-covered mountains of western China. They are so rare and endangered that they have become a symbol of the effort to protect Earth's animals.

Food and Feeding

- ③ The name *panda* comes from the language of Nepal, a country near China. Panda means “bamboo eater,” and bamboo makes up almost all of a panda’s diet. Bamboo, a kind of grass that grows extremely tall, is plentiful in the cold, damp, high mountains where pandas live.
- ④ Bamboo is low in the nutrients that pandas need for energy. For this reason, pandas must eat an amazing amount of bamboo in order to get enough nutrients. An adult panda spends as many as sixteen hours a day eating up to 18 kilograms (40 lbs) of bamboo.

Giant Panda Life Cycle

- ⑤ Giant pandas are mammals, and like all mammals, they give birth to live young and nurse them. A female panda begins having cubs when she is five or six years old, and then she gives birth to only one or two cubs every few years. A mother panda must work full-time to care for just one baby. She usually raises only one cub and ignores any others, which then die of neglect.
- ⑥ At birth, newborn pandas are tiny, blind, and completely dependent on their mother’s care. Because they are so helpless, they are vulnerable to predators. A baby panda develops slowly and cannot walk until the age of four months. It stops nursing and begins eating bamboo by the age of one year.

- 7 During the first two years of its life, a panda cub stays close to its mother, learning how to survive in the forest. The cub figures out how to find the best food plants and how to tell friend from enemy when it encounters other animals. A young panda's biggest dangers are leopards and wild dogs.
- 8 A panda is an adult by the age of three, and it can fend for itself without its mother. It settles in an area called a *home range*, where it feeds alone. Each panda gives other pandas signs to keep away from its home range. One sign is a smelly liquid that the panda releases from its body and rubs on tree trunks. A panda also marks the edges of its home range by scratching the bark of tree trunks.

5. Part A

Which two choices describe a giant panda at birth?

- (A) tiny
- (B) blind
- (C) feeds alone
- (D) learns how to survive
- (E) marks its home area

Part B

Which of the following describes a giant panda in the first two years of its life?

- (A) tiny
- (B) blind
- (C) feeds alone
- (D) learns how to survive
- (E) marks its home area

Part C

Which two choices describe an adult giant panda?

- (A) tiny
- (B) blind
- (C) feeds alone
- (D) learns how to survive
- (E) marks its home area

6. Part A

What is the main idea in the “Food and Feeding” section?

- (A) Pandas need to eat a lot of bamboo.
- (B) Giant pandas are mammals.
- (C) Wild pandas live in cold, wet, high mountains.
- (D) Bamboo is low in nutrients.

Part B

Which two details support the correct main idea from Part A?

- (A) Bamboo is low in nutrients.
- (B) Bamboo makes up almost all of a panda’s diet.
- (C) Giant pandas are mammals.
- (D) Wild pandas live in cold, damp, high mountains.

7. Part A

Which two statements describe how an adult panda tells other pandas to stay out of its home area?

- (A) They eat up to 18 kilograms (40 lbs) of bamboo.
- (B) They spend as many as sixteen hours a day eating.
- (C) They make loud noises to scare other pandas away.
- (D) They teach their cubs how to tell friend from enemy.
- (E) They rub a smelly liquid from their body onto tree trunks.
- (F) They mark their area by scratching the bark of tree trunks.

Part B

Based on the text, which is the most likely reason why adult pandas need to keep other pandas away from their home area?

- (A) Wild dogs are more likely to attack two pandas living together.
- (B) There is only enough food in their home area for one adult panda.
- (C) Adult pandas need to protect their young from other adult pandas.
- (D) Pandas do not see well enough to tell whether another panda is a friend or enemy.

8. Part A

What new information does this picture of an outline of a giant panda inside the outline of a grizzly bear show?

ARE PANDAS REALLY GIANT?

Giant pandas are actually one of the smaller kinds of bears. They are called “giant pandas” to distinguish them from red pandas, which also live in bamboo forests in China.



- (A) Pandas are a kind of bear.
- (B) Giant pandas are smaller than grizzly bears.
- (C) All bears, including pandas, walk on four legs.
- (D) Pandas look exactly like grizzly bears, only smaller.

Part B

Which is the best explanation for why the author included this chart and caption?

- (A) to show readers how grizzly bears and giant pandas are alike
- (B) to amuse readers with a funny illustration about grizzly bears and giant pandas
- (C) to explain why giant pandas are called “giant” even though they are small bears
- (D) to persuade readers to study grizzly bears next

9. Part A

Read this sentence about giant pandas:
*They are so rare and **endangered** that they have become a symbol of the effort to protect Earth's animals.*

What does **endangered** mean?

- (A) easy to train
- (B) nice to look at
- (C) at risk of dying out
- (D) dangerous to people

Part B

Which two phrases from the text help readers understand the meaning of the word **endangered**?

- (A) they are so rare
- (B) members of the bear family
- (C) *panda* means “bamboo eater”
- (D) pandas are easily recognizable
- (E) pandas must eat an amazing amount
- (F) among the most loved animals in the world
- (G) the forest-covered mountains of western China
- (H) a symbol of the effort to protect Earth's animals

10. Part A

Based on what you read in the text, what does the phrase “vulnerable to predators” mean?

- (A) growing very quickly
- (B) too young to eat bamboo
- (C) look different from their parents
- (D) likely to be eaten by other animals

Part B

Which two phrases from the text help readers understand the meaning of “vulnerable to predators”?

- (A) so helpless
- (B) are mammals
- (C) give birth to live young
- (D) is an adult by the age of three
- (E) biggest dangers are leopards and wild dogs
- (F) begins eating bamboo by the age of one year

11. Part A

Which three statements describe giant pandas?

- (A) eat mostly bamboo
- (B) excellent swimmers
- (C) hunt other animals for food
- (D) live in the mountains of China
- (E) need to eat a lot of food to survive

Part B

Which three statements describe polar bears?

- (A) eat mostly bamboo
- (B) excellent swimmers
- (C) hunt other animals for food
- (D) live in the mountains of China
- (E) need to eat a lot of food to survive

12. You have read two texts about bears. Write an essay that compares and contrasts giant pandas and polar bears.

- Explain two ways giant pandas and polar bears are alike.
- Explain two ways giant pandas and polar bears are different.
- Use details from both texts in your response.

1. (A) (B) (C) (D)

2. Part A

(A) (B) (C) (D)

Part B

(A) (B) (C) (D)

3. (A) (B) (C) (D)

4. Part A

(A) (B) (C) (D)

Part B

(A) (B) (C) (D)

5. Part A

(A) (B) (C) (D) (E)

Part B

(A) (B) (C) (D) (E)

Part C

(A) (B) (C) (D) (E)

6. Part A

(A) (B) (C) (D)

Part B

(A) (B) (C) (D)

7. Part A

(A) (B) (C) (D) (E) (F)

Part B

(A) (B) (C) (D)

8. Part A

(A) (B) (C) (D)

Part B

(A) (B) (C) (D)

9. Part A

(A) (B) (C) (D)

Part B

(A) (B) (C) (D) (E) (F) (G) (H)

10. Part A

(A) (B) (C) (D)

Part B

(A) (B) (C) (D) (E) (F)

11. Part A

(A) (B) (C) (D) (E) (F)

Part B

(A) (B) (C) (D) (E) (F)

12. Constructed Response