

9 Six-Legged Workers

Can you imagine being able to lift fifty people at once and carry them? You'd have to have superhuman strength. Well, you may be surprised to know that tiny ants do have this kind of strength. An ant can lift a load fifty times heavier than itself! Ants must often carry food to their homes from places that are far away. To do this, they must be very strong.

Ants live in tunnels that twist and turn in many directions, like the roots of a gnarled old tree. Thousands of ants can live in one nest. The tunnels are divided into parts. Each part serves a special purpose.

The royal chamber is the place where the queen ant lays her eggs. The queen spends her whole life laying eggs. She never leaves her chamber, except to start a new nest. Worker ants must bring food to her.

The worker ants in an ant colony have many different jobs. Some workers pull the eggs from the royal chamber into a room called the "nursery." There, they help larvae climb out of their shells. Larvae are the baby ants when they first come out of the eggs. In the nursery, there are workers who look after the larvae until they become full-grown ants. Some workers look for food and store it in the granary, where seeds are kept. Others dump leftovers in the rubbish room. Ants have their own complete, busy world hidden in tunnels under our feet!

Main Idea

1

Mark the *main idea*

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

Answer

Score

☒ M

15

☐ B

5

☐ N

5

a. In an ant colony, the ants have many different jobs.

☐

b. Ants are very busy insects.

☐

c. An ant can carry fifty times its own weight.

☐

what - insect
Bozokucik

ponds

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 This passage is mostly about

- ☐ a. human strength.
- ☐ b. ants at work.
- ☐ c. gnarled old trees.
- ☐ d. food storage.

Supporting Details 3 In the nursery, worker ants look after the

- ☐ a. queen.
- ☐ b. seeds.
- ☐ c. larvae.
- ☐ d. leftovers.

Conclusion 4 Dividing the work so that each worker has a certain job helps

- ☐ a. keep the nest organized.
- ☐ b. the queen to get more food.
- ☐ c. keep the workers happy.
- ☐ d. the ants live longer.

Clarifying Devices 5 The writer compares the twisting tunnels of an ant nest to

- ☐ a. the strength of humans.
- ☐ b. a gnarled old tree.
- ☐ c. a royal palace.
- ☐ d. a hospital nursery.

Vocabulary in Context 6 The word gnarled means

- ☐ a. twisted
- ☐ b. giant.
- ☐ c. confusing.
- ☐ d. difficult.

Add your scores for questions 1-6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 215.

Total Score

10 The Collapsing Road

The young couple was very lucky. The back tires of their car stayed on the road. Otherwise, the car—and its passengers—would have fallen right into a pit twenty feet wide and thirty feet deep!

The man and woman were coming home from a party. They were enjoying the landscape around Swansea, Wales. Suddenly, they found the front of their car leaning into a huge hole. The car barely hung on to the edge of the pit. It swayed back and forth like the arm of a balance.

In their precarious position, the couple knew that each movement they made could be a matter of life and death. Slowly, slowly, they edged toward the backseat. Then each opened a back door. And on the count of three, they jumped out together. The accident was so scary that they ran a long way before they calmed down. But later they returned to see what happened. They found that a big chunk of the road had sunk into the ground! At the bottom of the pit lay their car—roof down and wheels up.

Was this mystery of the sunken road ever solved? It turned out that an abandoned mine shaft lay under the road. It had collapsed and taken the pavement with it. Layers of tunnels intersect beneath the city of Swansea. The tunnels were built so many years ago that no one knows where they end or begin. The tunnels are shaky, like those that ants build in the sand. It's even possible that the entire city might collapse.

Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	5

- a. The abandoned mine tunnels below Swansea were the cause of an accident. ☐
- b. Swansea is a very dangerous city to drive in. ☐
- c. The pit in the road was very wide and deep. ☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 This passage is primarily about
- ☐ a. driving carefully.
 - ☐ b. the city of Swansea, Wales.
 - ☐ c. a road that caved in.
 - ☐ d. tunnels that ants build.
- Supporting Details** 3 According to this selection, the pit was
- ☐ a. a mile wide.
 - ☐ b. bottomless.
 - ☐ c. part of a volcano.
 - ☐ d. thirty feet deep.
- Conclusion** 4 It is probably true that
- ☐ a. the other roads in Swansea are pretty safe.
 - ☐ b. other sections of Swansea will cave in sometime.
 - ☐ c. everyone should move out of Swansea.
 - ☐ d. Swansea is a very interesting city.
- Clarifying Devices** 5 The writer creates interest in the first three sentences by using
- ☐ a. a funny story.
 - ☐ b. romantic imagery.
 - ☐ c. a vivid description.
 - ☐ d. a precise argument.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 The word precarious means
- ☐ a. unexpected.
 - ☐ b. dangerous.
 - ☐ c. unusual.
 - ☐ d. ridiculous.

Add your scores for questions 1-6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 215.

Total
Score

11 A Whale of a Story

There has been, in history, a man who was swallowed by a whale and lived to tell the tale. The man's name was James Bartley. The records to prove his unusual experience are in the British Admiralty.

This story takes place at a time when whales were hunted for meat and oil. Bartley was making his first trip on the whaling ship *Star of the East*. Suddenly the lookout sighted a huge sperm whale. The whalers knew it was a huge whale by the size of the spray it blew into the air. They lowered their small boats. James Bartley was in the first longboat. The men rowed until they were close to the whale. A harpoon was thrown and found its mark. It sank into the whale's flesh. The maddened beast crashed into the boat, snapping its tail at the men and the wreckage of their boats. When the survivors were picked up, James Bartley was missing.

Shortly before sunset, the whale was finally captured. The sailors tied the whale's carcass to the side of the ship. Because of the hot weather it was important that they cut up the whale right away. Otherwise, the meat would begin to rot and the oil would begin to spoil. When they got to the stomach, they felt something moving about wildly. They thought it would be a big fish still alive inside. But when they opened the stomach they found James Bartley. After this trip, Bartley settled in Gloucester, England, and never returned to sea.

Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	5
a. Whaling was a dangerous business.	<input type="checkbox"/>	___
b. A whale smashed a small boat from the whaling ship.	<input type="checkbox"/>	___
c. James Bartley was swallowed by a whale and lived.	<input type="checkbox"/>	___

John - Bozokucik

ponds

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter

2 This passage is mainly about

- ☐ a. how to hunt whales for their oil and meat.
- ☐ b. the hard and dangerous lives that whalers had to live.
- ☐ c. the duties of each man on a whaling ship.
- ☐ d. a man who managed to survive inside a whale.

Supporting Details

3 The sailors knew that something was in the whale's stomach because

- ☐ a. they could feel something moving about wildly.
- ☐ b. the whale seemed very heavy.
- ☐ c. the whale was bulging out at one spot.
- ☐ d. the captain heard Bartley yelling for help.

Conclusion

4 James Bartley probably never went to sea again because

- ☐ a. he wanted different kinds of adventures.
- ☐ b. of fright and shock.
- ☐ c. he was crippled by the whale.
- ☐ d. he often got seasick.

Clarifying Devices

5 The author, in telling James Bartley's story, informs us by

- ☐ a. narrating the plain facts.
- ☐ b. referring to whaling in general.
- ☐ c. comparing whaling to other fishing.
- ☐ d. dramatically telling what happened.

Vocabulary in Context

6 The word carcass refers to the

- ☐ a. whale's tail.
- ☐ b. whale's blubber.
- ☐ c. dead body of the whale.
- ☐ d. whale's side.

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Total Score

12 The Hermit

Most people like living with other people. But some people just have to be by themselves. Take Bozo Kucik, for example. For over eighty-four years Bozo lived all alone on a desert island.

In 1888, when Bozo was only sixteen, his father left him on a little island off the coast of Croatia. He kissed Bozo goodbye and said, "I hope all goes well with you, my son." Then the father got back in his boat and sailed home without his son. How could he do such a thing, you ask? Well, Bozo had asked him to.

Bozo's father was a poor peasant who couldn't afford to feed his seven children. So he called his sons together and asked them to decide their own futures. Bozo chose the life of a hermit.

During the years that Bozo lived alone, World Wars I and II were fought. But Bozo never heard about them. In 1972, a crew of fishermen visited his island. They tried to talk to Bozo. At first the old hermit ran away. Finally, he let the men into his windowless stone hut.

The fishermen talked with Bozo for over two hours. They told him all about the two world wars he had missed. When they asked his age, Bozo guessed he was one hundred years old.

They asked if he wanted to go home. But Bozo said no. So the fisherman wished Bozo well and left him alone again—just as his father had eighty-four years before.

Main Idea

1

Mark the *main idea*

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

Answer

Score

M

15

B

5

N

5

a. Bozo lived alone on an island for eighty-four years.

☐

b. Bozo was one of seven children.

☐

c. Many people wish to live alone.

☐

where - ponds

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 Another good title for the passage would be
- ☐ a. Living Alone.
 - ☐ b. Eighty-Four Years Alone.
 - ☐ c. Why Bozo Left Home.
 - ☐ d. A Desert Island.
- Supporting Details** 3 According to the passage, Bozo's father was a
- ☒ a. fisherman.
 - ☐ b. hermit.
 - ☐ c. peasant.
 - ☐ d. soldier.
- Conclusion** 4 One can assume from the passage that Bozo definitely did not have which of the following?
- ☐ a. Tools
 - ☐ b. Clothes
 - ☐ c. Radio
 - ☐ d. Food
- Clarifying Devices** 5 When Bozo first saw the fishermen he was
- ☐ a. frightened.
 - ☐ b. overjoyed.
 - ☐ c. curious.
 - ☐ d. angry.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 The best definition for the word hermit is someone who
- ☐ a. doesn't like people.
 - ☐ b. lives on an island.
 - ☐ c. lives alone.
 - ☐ d. likes quiet.

Add your scores for questions 1-6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 215.

Total
Score

13 Forever Amber

Amber is a substance that lasts and lasts. Scientists are very glad of this. Without amber, we would not have many of the world's important insect remains. Amber is a hard, yellowish-brown resin found in the earth. It is translucent, which means you can see through it. It is known for its ability to preserve things.

Long ago, amber was not as hard as it is today. It was soft and gummy. Insects that weren't careful about where they walked often got trapped in it. The poor bugs that got caught in the sticky amber died. But they were forever preserved. The golden resin worked like a wax mold. It shaped itself around the insects. The resin hardened as the bodies of the dead insects slowly fell into decay.

The last traces of the insects trapped in amber have been gone for thousands of years. But the imprints of their bodies remained fixed in the hardened resin. Although the bugs are gone from the earth, their imprints remain for us to study. Many of these imprints are very fine and detailed. Preserved imprints of creatures and plants that once lived are called fossils. They help scientists learn more about life on earth in the past.

Main Idea

1

Mark the *main idea*

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

Answer

Score

M

15

B

5

N

5

a. Objects from long ago can tell us a lot about our past.

☐

b. Amber has preserved the shapes of ancient insects.

☐

c. Insects got caught in the sticky amber resin.

☐

what - insect
where - ponds

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 This passage is about
- ☐ a. the properties of amber.
 - ☐ b. how amber preserved things.
 - ☐ c. how amber resin hardened.
 - ☐ d. how amber was found.
- Supporting Details** 3 Insects that walked in amber
- ☐ a. got stuck in the gooey substance.
 - ☐ b. found it to be slippery.
 - ☐ c. used it to build their nests.
 - ☐ d. became very hard.
- Conclusion** 4 We can conclude from this passage that amber
- ☐ a. has almost disappeared from the earth.
 - ☐ b. is produced by dead insects.
 - ☐ c. has played an important role in the study of prehistoric creatures.
 - ☐ d. is used to make candles.
- Clarifying Devices** 5 The gummy amber resin acted like
- ☐ a. glue.
 - ☐ b. a dead insect.
 - ☐ c. a wax mold.
 - ☐ d. a fossil.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 In this case mold means
- ☐ a. a fungus.
 - ☐ b. a form used to make a special shape.
 - ☐ c. rich earth.
 - ☐ d. to influence.

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Total
Score