

43 The Ancient Cockroach

He was there to greet the dinosaurs when they arrived on earth. He is still with us 170 million years and billions of kitchens later. Rather than being honored, this sage is despised. Nobody likes a cockroach. Perhaps our hatred of this hearty insect is due to envy. No creature knows more about survival than the cockroach.

A cockroach can live in the middle of the desert or under a kitchen sink. Recently, roaches have been found living in TV sets—the parts that heat up provide warmth, and the wax in the set serves as food. Roaches can survive on almost anything from rose petals to laundry soap. They can even do without any food or water at all for up to a month.

Cockroaches like living with people because there's always food around. Even ships at sea are plagued by cockroaches. One sea captain offered a bottle of brandy to any sailor who could catch one thousand roaches on board the ship. The crew turned in 32,000 of the pests.

Many fancy poisons are used to kill roaches, but there is no hope of getting rid of them completely. So keep your food wrapped up as tightly as possible. But remember, the roach's existence is one of those creepy facts of life on earth.

Main Idea

1

Mark the *main idea*

Answer

Score

M

15

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

B

5

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

N

5

- The cockroach is one of the world's great survivors.
- The cockroach can eat almost anything.
- It's amazing that some creatures have survived on earth for millions of years.

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Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 Another good title for this passage would be

- ☐ a. How Cockroaches Eat.
- ☐ b. The Hearty Cockroach.
- ☐ c. Pest Control.
- ☐ d. Brandy Reward.

Supporting Details 3 Cockroaches that live in television sets eat

- ☐ a. laundry soap.
- ☐ b. rose petals.
- ☐ c. dust.
- ☐ d. wax.

Conclusion 4 The first sentence of the passage suggests that

- ☐ a. dinosaurs are older than cockroaches.
- ☐ b. there was only one cockroach 170 million years ago.
- ☐ c. cockroaches existed before dinosaurs.
- ☐ d. cockroaches helped to kill off the dinosaurs.

Clarifying Devices 5 The author makes the point that cockroaches can survive anywhere by presenting

- ☐ a. detailed word pictures.
- ☐ b. scientific studies.
- ☐ c. several different facts.
- ☐ d. horror stories.

Vocabulary in Context 6 A sage is

- ☐ a. an herb.
- ☐ b. someone old and wise.
- ☐ c. a western bush.
- ☐ d. a story.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 217.

Total
Score