

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS**

Read the text and then answer the questions.

The Kalahari Desert spans three African countries; it goes across Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa. The Kalahari Desert is a very special place. Like other deserts, it has sand. And like other deserts, it can get dry and very hot. But the Kalahari is not just a large, empty land. And it does not have only sand dunes. Unlike many deserts, the Kalahari gets some rainfall. There are some woodlands and some dry grasslands, too. When the summer rains come, flowers and plants bloom. Water holes fill up.

Many different kinds of animals live in the Kalahari. When it is very hot and dry, these animals find ways to stay cool. When it rains, they go to the watering holes to drink.

**SCORE**

1. (Y) (N)

2. (Y) (N)

3. (Y) (N)

4. (Y) (N)

5. (Y) (N)

\_\_\_ / 5

**Total**

1. On which continent would you find the Kalahari Desert?

- (A) Asia
- (B) Africa
- (C) North America
- (D) Australia

2. Which is **not** a fact about the Kalahari Desert?

- (A) Many kinds of animals live there.
- (B) It is a very large desert.
- (C) It is in three countries.
- (D) It has only sand dunes.

3. Which of these words is a preposition?

- (A) and
- (B) Kalahari
- (C) across
- (D) goes

4. What does the word *spans* mean?

- (A) goes across
- (B) is hot
- (C) rains
- (D) goes under

5. What does the phrase *different from* mean?

- (A) similar
- (B) like
- (C) unlike
- (D) empty

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4. (Y) (N)

5. (Y) (N)

\_\_\_ / 5

**Total**

The Kalahari Desert can get very hot. Summer is the hottest season there. The Kalahari is in the Southern Hemisphere. So, its seasons are different from the Northern Hemisphere. There, summer lasts from November to March. Winter lasts from May to August. In the summer, temperatures can rise to over 100 degrees during the day. At night, they go down to around 68 or 70 degrees. In the winter, temperatures during the day are about 77 degrees. But the nights can get very, very cold. Temperatures can drop to 14 degrees! The Kalahari is a desert, but it does get rain. The rain is usually not steady. Instead, it comes in thunderstorms. When it rains, dry water holes fill up. So do lakes. Flowers and plants bloom. Animals come to drink. The rainy season is between November and April. The rainiest month is usually April.

**1.** What is this text mostly about?

- (A) the climate of the Kalahari  
 (B) the animals in the Kalahari  
 (C) rain  
 (D) the seasons

**4.** Which is an antonym of *bloom*?

- (A) grow  
 (B) flower  
 (C) wither  
 (D) blossom

**2.** Why does the Kalahari Desert have seasons that are different from the Northern Hemisphere?

- (A) It is a dry desert.  
 (B) It is very large.  
 (C) It is in the Southern Hemisphere.  
 (D) The rain comes in thunderstorms.

**5.** If the rainiest month is usually April, then the word *usually* tells you what?

- (A) April is always the rainiest month.  
 (B) April is most often the rainiest month.  
 (C) It never rains in April.  
 (D) There is no rain in the Kalahari.

**3.** Which is an independent clause?

- (A) holes  
 (B) dry water  
 (C) when it rains  
 (D) dry water holes fill up

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**DIRECTIONS**

Read the text and then answer the questions.

The Kalahari Desert can be very hot and dry. But many kinds of animals and plants make their home there. They have found ways to stay cool and get enough water. One animal that lives in this desert is the Kalahari lion. This lion is a big cat, like other lions. But it hunts for animals smaller than the ones that other lions hunt. That is because most Kalahari animals are small. The male Kalahari lion has a black mane. Another animal that lives in this desert is the *gemsbok*. It is a large antelope. Gemsboks can live for a long time without drinking water. They get the water they need from the plants they eat. Many desert trees live in the Kalahari, too. For example, the camelthorn tree makes nutrients for other plants. Those plants become food for animals. The camelthorn tree also offers shade.

**SCORE**

1. (Y) (N)

2. (Y) (N)

3. (Y) (N)

4. (Y) (N)

5. (Y) (N)

\_\_\_ / 5

**Total****1.** What is a *gemsbok*?

- (A) It is a tree.  
 (B) It is a lion.  
 (C) It is a plant.  
 (D) It is a large antelope.

**4.** Which word is an adjective?

- (A) lion  
 (B) black  
 (C) also  
 (D) hunt

**2.** Which one of these does **not** live in the Kalahari Desert?

- (A) camelthorn tree  
 (B) Kalahari lion  
 (C) gemsbok  
 (D) otter

**5.** Which word describes the tone of this text?

- (A) factual  
 (B) angry  
 (C) funny  
 (D) persuasive

**3.** How many syllables are in the word *nutrients*?

- (A) one syllable  
 (B) two syllables  
 (C) three syllables  
 (D) four syllables

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## MARVELOUS MEERKATS

Living in the Kalahari Desert isn't easy, but meerkats do it very well. Meerkats are small, furry mammals about two feet long. They are members of the mongoose family. They have sharp claws that are used for digging burrows and looking for food. Meerkats have long tails; they use their tails for balance so they can stand upright. Meerkats need to stand upright so that they can watch for danger.

Meerkats are built for life in the harsh desert. They live in underground tunnels. Their eyes have dark circles that act like sunglasses. They have special patches of skin on their bellies that absorb the sunlight, which they use to stay warm during the cold desert nights.

Meerkats are social animals. They live in groups called "mobs" or "gangs." Meerkat mobs work together to stay alive. For example, meerkats look for food during the day. When they are hunting, some meerkats stand guard to watch for enemies. Hawks and eagles like to eat meerkats; so do some other animals. So, meerkats always have to be on the lookout. If there is danger, the guards call out an alert. Then, all the meerkats return to their den.

Meerkats raise their young together, too. Baby meerkats are very tiny when they are born. Their eyes are closed and they are helpless. So the adult meerkats all take turns babysitting. They all work together as a team to take care of the baby meerkats. They teach the babies how to look for food and watch out for enemies. Baby meerkats take about a year to mature into adults.

What do meerkats enjoy eating? They usually eat bugs and small rodents, such as mice. Sometimes they eat small snakes, and they can even eat the poisonous scorpion. Its poison does not make them sick. Meerkats are very well adapted for their desert life!



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS**

Read "Marvelous Meerkats" and then answer the questions.

**1.** Why do meerkats need sharp claws?

- (A) They use their claws for swimming.
- (B) They use their claws to dig burrows.
- (C) They use their claws to take care of the babies.
- (D) They use their claws to climb trees.

**2.** Which of these is a topic sentence?

- (A) They live in underground tunnels.
- (B) Their eyes have dark circles that act like sunglasses.
- (C) Then, they can stay warm during the cold desert night.
- (D) Meerkats are built for life in the harsh desert.

**3.** The author wants the reader to

- (A) learn about snakes and mice.
- (B) raise a meerkat.
- (C) learn about meerkats.
- (D) live in the desert.

**4.** Which inference can be made about why meerkats live in underground tunnels?

- (A) They are too large to live above ground.
- (B) They cannot see.
- (C) Tunnels help them keep warm during the cold desert night.
- (D) They do not like sunlight.

**5.** Which of these words describes meerkats?

- (A) solitary
- (B) social
- (C) huge
- (D) slow

**6.** Which statement is most likely true?

- (A) Meerkats do not need a lot of water.
- (B) Meerkats are good swimmers.
- (C) Meerkats have thick winter coats.
- (D) Meerkats lay eggs.

**7.** Which of the following is **not** a supporting detail from the text?

- (A) Adult meerkats take turns babysitting the young.
- (B) Meerkats eat bugs and small rodents.
- (C) Meerkats have short tails.
- (D) Meerkats live in underground tunnels.

**8.** Which sentence from the text is a good summary of the text?

- (A) Meerkat mobs work together to stay alive.
- (B) They live in underground tunnels.
- (C) What do meerkats enjoy eating?
- (D) Meerkats are very well adapted for their desert life!

**SCORE**

1. (Y) (N)

2. (Y) (N)

3. (Y) (N)

4. (Y) (N)

5. (Y) (N)

6. (Y) (N)

7. (Y) (N)

8. (Y) (N)

\_\_\_ / 8

**Total**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS**

Reread the text “Marvelous Meerkats.” Then, read the prompt and respond on the lines below.

**SCORE**

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Pretend you are a meerkat. What is your day like? Describe your day.

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