

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	3
<b>Practice Pages</b>	
<i>(In order, the practice pages include a nonfiction story, a fiction story, and a set of five questions about the stories.)</i>	
1. <i>Stories:</i> “An Optical Illusion” and “Kimiko’s Thumb” .....	4
2. <i>Stories:</i> “The Big Discovery” and “Which Pet to Get?” .....	6
3. <i>Stories:</i> “Pockets Full of Evidence” and “The Three Cases” .....	8
4. <i>Stories:</i> “Fastest on Land” and “A Kenyan Folk Tale” .....	10
5. <i>Stories:</i> “An Innate Fear” and “Fears and Phobias” .....	12
6. <i>Stories:</i> “Safe and Warm” and “The History of the X-Ray” .....	14
7. <i>Stories:</i> “What Was for Dinner” and “Eating a Dinosaur” .....	16
8. <i>Stories:</i> “Willie’s Catch” and “A Winning Attitude” .....	18
9. <i>Stories:</i> “A Corps Member” and “The Only Woman” .....	20
10. <i>Stories:</i> “Seeing Through Skin” and “Eva’s New Boots” .....	22
11. <i>Stories:</i> “The Ironman” and “A Long Race Gets Longer” .....	24
12. <i>Stories:</i> “The Last of a Language” and “The Code” .....	26
13. <i>Stories:</i> “Cold, Dark, and Famous” and “Tashiki’s Discovery” .....	28
14. <i>Stories:</i> “Why the Mail Was Late” and “Never Before Seen” .....	30
15. <i>Stories:</i> “Alone in the Atlantic” and “Survival at Sea” .....	32
16. <i>Stories:</i> “Counterfeit Chocolate” and “The Fake Masterpiece” .....	34
17. <i>Stories:</i> “Six Days of Survival” and “The Pilot’s Survival Kit” .....	36
18. <i>Stories:</i> “Snake on the Loose” and “A Clever Escape” .....	38
19. <i>Stories:</i> “A Man and His Words” and “What They Said” .....	40
20. <i>Stories:</i> “The Weary Hounds” and “Aesop’s Crow” .....	42
21. <i>Stories:</i> “The Power of Gold” and “Winter in a Gold Town” .....	44
22. <i>Stories:</i> “The Underground Town” and “The Lucky Kick” .....	46
<b>Answer Key</b> .....	48

Nonfiction

## The Big Discovery

When most people think of rodents, they think of rats or mice. They think of small things with big front teeth. But not all rodents are small. In fact, scientists have just discovered the remains of a very large rodent.

Exactly how big was this rodent? Scientists think it may have been more than 8 feet long and weighed over 2,000 pounds. In other words, think of a mouse as big as a bull!

The funny thing about this fossil is that it was discovered twice. It was found the first time in 1987 in Uruguay, a country in South America. The man who discovered the fossil gave it to a museum. The fossil sat in a box, hidden from view in the museum, until it was rediscovered more than 20 years later when the box was finally opened.

Scientists could tell that the animal was a rodent because of the shape of its skull and its huge incisors. Incisors are front teeth with a cutting edge. Scientists could tell from the teeth that the animal was an herbivore, or plant-eater.

Scientists think that the rodent lived in lowland rain forests between two and four million years ago. Scientists think it may have used its huge incisors to protect itself. They may have been used to ward off saber-toothed cats or giant, flightless, meat-eating birds.

---

Fiction

## Which Pet to Get?

Mandy said, “Dad, can I please have a pet? A feline or a canine would be best. I promise that I’ll behave responsibly and take care of it.”

Mandy’s father replied, “I don’t want you to get a feline or a canine. A cat would jump onto counters, sit on the furniture, and leave its hair everywhere. A dog would bark and would have to be taken out for walks. No, you cannot have a feline or a canine.”

Mandy said, “How about if I have a reptile for a pet? I could have a snake! A snake would not leave hair anywhere, and it would not bark.”

Her father answered, “Snakes are reptiles, and they are carnivores. They eat meat. You would have to feed your snake live mice. No, you cannot have a snake.”

Mandy said, “Mice are rodents. Could I have a rodent? I could take good care of a rodent.”

Mandy’s father thought about mice, guinea pigs, and rats. They are all small. “All right,” he agreed.

When Mandy’s father came home the next day, he stared in shock at Mandy’s pet. It wasn’t small! It was a rodent the size of a small pig!

Mandy grinned as she said, “Isn’t my capybara the greatest, Dad?” The capybara is the world’s largest rodent. It comes from South America. It can weigh up to 143 pounds!

---

**Practice 2 – Questions**

---

**Directions:** Fill in the bubble next to each correct answer.

**1. What is most likely not true about the largest rodent that ever lived?**

- (A) It ate meat.
  - (B) It was as big as a bull.
  - (C) It had huge front teeth.
  - (D) It lived between two and four million years ago.
- 

**2. Most likely, Mandy’s capybara**

- (A) ate live mice.
  - (B) did not have hair.
  - (C) had large incisors.
  - (D) was discovered in 1987.
- 

**3. From the stories, one can tell that a saber-toothed tiger is**

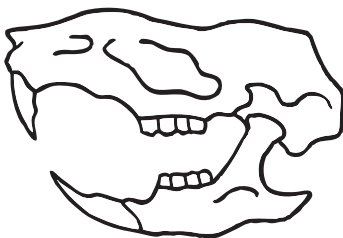
- (A) a canine carnivore.
  - (B) a feline carnivore.
  - (C) a canine herbivore.
  - (D) a feline herbivore.
- 

**4. Keep them straight! Write down one example of each.**

feline	canine	reptile	rodent

---

**5. Circle the teeth you think are the incisors. Copy down the sentence or sentences you read in the story that helped you pick your answer.**



---

---

---

---

**Nonfiction**

## What Was for Dinner

David Love was a geologist who studied rocks, fossils, and the Earth's crust. He grew up in Wyoming on a ranch in the early 1900s. When David was born, he and his brother were the only children within a thousand square miles (2,590 sq. km).

Once, when David and his brother were young, they killed a huge rattlesnake. To David's family, the snake was more than a dangerous and poisonous viper: it was food. That night, David's mother served the snake for dinner. She served it creamed on toast.

There was a guest for dinner the night the rattlesnake was served. David's father told David and his brother that they were not to use the word "rattlesnake" at the table. Instead, the boys were to use the word "chicken." This was, their father said, because the guest might not be too happy about eating a poisonous viper.

During the meal, David and his brother started talking about rattlesnakes and other poisonous vipers. They talked about how often they encountered snakes and where the vipers' dens could be found. They also said how very good rattlesnakes were to eat.

Their guest responded, "If anybody ever gave me rattlesnake meat, I'd kill them."

David and his brother became very quiet, but their mother simply asked the guest if he wanted more chicken.

"Don't mind if I do," the guest replied.

---

**Fiction**

## Eating a Dinosaur

Alejandro said, "You said I could have what I wanted, and I told you that I don't want to eat anything but a dinosaur on my birthday!"

Alejandro's mother sighed. She said, "Alejandro, be reasonable. How can I get you a dinosaur to eat? Dinosaurs are extinct. They died out a long time ago."

Angrily, Alejandro said, "Then I won't be eating anything on my birthday!"

As Alejandro's birthday got closer and closer, everyone began to tease him. They said things like, "Better fill up now because you won't be eating anything on your birthday!"

Alejandro's big brother Thomas told his mother he would find a dinosaur for Alejandro to eat. "You know dinosaurs are extinct," his mother replied tiredly.

All of Alejandro's friends came over on his birthday. They cried, "We've come for dinosaur! Alejandro said we could eat some dinosaur on his birthday!"

Alejandro's mother started to explain that dinosaurs were extinct, but then Thomas came in. He was carrying a dinosaur! The dinosaur had big brown spikes down its back. It had sharp yellow teeth, and its skin was covered with green and black spots.

Grinning, Thomas said, "I made a cake in the shape of a circle. Then I cut it up and arranged it into a dinosaur shape. I decorated it with chocolate, candy corn, and gumdrops."

Everyone agreed that Thomas's cake was the best-tasting dinosaur they had ever had!

---

**Practice 7 – Questions**

---

**Directions:** Fill in the bubble next to each correct answer.

**1. When a type of animal is no longer living, it is**

- (A) reasonable. (C) decorated.  
(B) arranged. (D) extinct.
- 

**2. What do both stories have in common?**

- (A) animals that have become extinct  
(B) sharing food with birthday guests  
(C) encountering snakes and other vipers  
(D) eating something one would not expect to
- 

**3. From the stories, you can tell that most likely some**

- (A) snakes taste like cake. (C) snakes taste like chicken.  
(B) dinosaurs taste like cake. (D) dinosaurs taste like chicken.
- 

**4. List in order what happens in the story. Use the numbers 1 to 5. Put “1” by what happened first. Put “5” by what happened last.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ David and his brother talk about where to find snake dens.  
\_\_\_\_\_ David’s mother offers more chicken to their guest.  
\_\_\_\_\_ David and his brother are told not to use the word “rattlesnake.”  
\_\_\_\_\_ David and his brother kill a rattlesnake.  
\_\_\_\_\_ The guest says he would kill anyone who serves him rattlesnake.
- 

**5. Look at the labeled pictures. One shows the round cake when Thomas first cut it, and the other shows the cake after Thomas arranged it into the shape of a dinosaur. Some of the labels are missing on the dinosaur cake. Which labels should be on the following dinosaur parts:**

body \_\_\_\_\_

tail \_\_\_\_\_

top of the head \_\_\_\_\_

