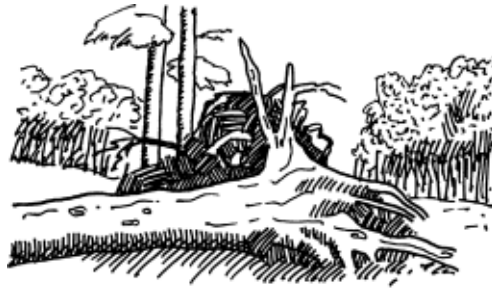




Grade 5

Weekly Assessments

Read the article “The Fall of the Giants” before answering Numbers 1 through 5.



The Fall of the Giants

The Sequoia National Forest in California’s Sierra Nevada Mountains is home to the most massive trees in the world. At its entrance is the Trail of 100 Giants, a short, easy, paved trail that people can walk. It gives visitors great views of more than a hundred sequoias. These trees grow only in the special geology of the slopes of the Sierra Nevadas. The largest of the trees is 20 feet around and 220 feet tall. You almost need a telescope to see the top of it!

The sequoia trees that line the Trail of 100 Giants have stood for generations. Many of these botanical wonders started growing in the Middle Ages. The trees watched the first Europeans settle in California and they grew while America fought its revolution and its civil war. They grew through the Gold Rush in the mid-1800s and two world wars. The trees were declared a national monument in 2000.

Then, in October 2011, two of the giants fell. There were only a few tourists nearby. One photographer from Germany used a video camera to record the trees crashing to the ground. Luckily, nobody was hurt, but watchers were astonished that these enormous trees could topple like babies trying to take their first steps. One explanation was that the summer had been very wet, and the ground was quite hydrated. The earth may have been too soggy to hold the shallow roots of the trees.

Some officials fear that the foot traffic from tourists might have weakened the trees. Even pollution from cars visiting the park could have damaged them. Three to four million people a year visit Yosemite National Park, where the Trail of 100 Giants is located. It might be, though, that the trees were simply old and it was the time in their life cycle to die.

The trees may have been as much as 1,500 years old. They were more than 200 feet tall. The two that fell were connected at their base, and most park scientists believe that when the first one fell, it brought the second one down with it.

The question now is, what should be done with the fallen trees? They fell across a popular path, crushing a bridge and blocking the walkway. The trunks are too big for most walkers to climb over, though some have tried. The path they block is designed for people in wheelchairs, and there is no other path that these people can use. The Park Service asked the public what they thought.

People's ideas have been varied. Many biologists think the trees should be left just as they are, letting nature take its course. Some people feel that the Forest Service should drill a tunnel through the trunk so people can simply walk through. Some want to build a bridge over the trees, but the bridge would have to be one that wheelchairs could use. Some think the path should go around the trees. And some believe the trees should be cut up for firewood.

Park officials have decided to take their time deciding what to do. In the past, they have had to cut down dead trees to be sure that visitors to the park would be safe. Since the trees are national monuments now, though, any decision must be carefully considered. The sequoias are a rare treasure, and even in death, they should be treated with respect.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Now answer Numbers 1 through 5. Base your answers on “The Fall of the Giants.”

- 1** Read the sentence from the text.

These trees grow only in the special geology of the slopes of the Sierra Nevadas.

The root of geology is geo, which means “earth.” What is studied in geology?

- (A)** animals
- (B)** land
- (C)** people
- (D)** trees

- 2** Read the paragraph.

The sequoia trees that line the Trail of 100 Giants have stood for generations. Many of these botanical wonders started growing in the Middle Ages. The trees watched the first Europeans settle in California and they grew while America fought its revolution and its civil war. They grew through the Gold Rush in the mid-1800s and two world wars. The trees were declared a national monument in 2000.

Which detail would **best** support the main idea of the paragraph?

- (A)** The trees grow taller and taller every day.
- (B)** Sequoias have seen much of our country’s history.
- (C)** The Gold Rush was responsible in part for the migration west.
- (D)** The Sierra Nevada Mountains are in the western part of the U.S.

- 3** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Read the paragraph. Then, answer the questions.

Then, in October 2011, two of the giants fell. There were only a few tourists nearby. One photographer from Germany used a video camera to record the trees crashing to the ground. Luckily, nobody was hurt, but watchers were astonished that these enormous trees could topple like babies trying to take their first steps. One explanation was that the summer had been very wet, and the ground was quite hydrated. The earth may have been too soggy to hold the shallow roots of the trees.

Part A: What is the main idea of the paragraph?

- (A)** A German photographer took a video of a sequoia falling.
- (B)** Walking through the sequoias can be dangerous.
- (C)** Two sequoias fell down recently in the park.
- (D)** Sequoias fall down easily when they get old.

Part B: Which sentence from the paragraph **best** states the main idea?

- (A)** "Then, in October 2011, two of the giants fell."
- (B)** "There were only a few tourists nearby."
- (C)** "One photographer from Germany used a video camera to record the trees crashing to the ground."
- (D)** "Luckily, nobody was hurt, but watchers were astonished that these enormous trees could topple like babies trying to take their first steps."

- 4** Determine the meaning of the Greek root in each underlined word. Draw a line from the sentence with the word on the left to the meaning of the Greek root on the right.

Many of these botanical wonders started growing in the Middle Ages.

water

One explanation was that the summer had been very wet, and the ground was quite hydrated.

circle

It might be, though, that the trees were simply old and it was the time in their life cycle to die.

plant

- 5** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: What is the central idea of the article?

- (A)** People should do more to help save the sequoias.
- (B)** It is lucky nobody was hurt when the sequoias fell.
- (C)** The death of a sequoia is an important natural event.
- (D)** Not many people have the chance to see a sequoia fall.

Part B: Read the sentence.

The earth may have been too soggy to hold the shallow roots of the trees.

How does the sentence support the central idea of the article?

- (A)** It provides details about what happened after the sequoias fell.
- (B)** It shows how giant sequoias are able to grow as large as they do.
- (C)** It gives information about what the Sequoia National Forest looks like.
- (D)** It suggests a reason why two giant sequoias fell in the Sequoia National Forest.

Read the article “Super Snakes” before answering Numbers 6 through 10.



Super Snakes

Many people have a snake phobia because they know only the common myths about these reptiles. Few snakes are deadly, but poisonous species have certainly given snakes a bad reputation! Here are some facts about snakes that will help you better understand these members of the animal kingdom living in our biosphere.

Snakes can survive in many geographic areas. They are not found in the polar regions of the world, though, because snakes are cold-blooded. Their body thermostat changes their body temperature to match how hot or cold the air is. A snake would freeze and die in the Arctic or Antarctic.

Nature has given this creature many gifts, one of which is the way its skin looks. Its patterns and coloring help the reptile hide from animals that will attack and eat it. Many snake species have skin the dull color of the ground. The kinds that slither up trees may be bright green, like leaves.

Snakes can go for weeks or even months between meals, and some snakes eat only once or twice a year. Because of this, they do not need to hunt constantly for food.

The snake's flickering tongue may look frightening as it vibrates, but it is part of an important sense organ for the snake. This special organ is located on the roof of its mouth. The snake uses it to smell prey and to find a mate. Some snakes, like the python, have special cells on top of their heads. These microscopic cells help them locate warm-blooded animals.

GO ON →

Snakes use the muscles along the sides of their bodies to slither from place to place. They have four different ways to move. Some snakes bunch themselves up and then thrust themselves forward. Some push off and move in a wave-like motion. Some move the middle of their bodies up and down. This pushes their heads forward. And some grip the ground with their scales, using the scales and their muscles to push themselves forward.

Most snakes feed on small mammals. Big snakes, like pythons, will attack much larger prey. Constrictor snakes wrap themselves around large prey and compress it like a belt that is much too tight. Snakes will often win what look like impossible battles. Because they can move so rapidly and quietly, snakes are very effective hunters. The same muscles that move the snake along help to move the snake's meal through its system.

Snakes have many enemies themselves. Raccoons, birds, foxes, coyotes, and even other snakes eat snakes, and humans can be their enemies, too. Many humans are afraid of snakes and will hunt them to get rid of them. Humans also build communities in snake territory. With each generation, snakes have less and less room to live.

It is true that some snakes are poisonous. They use their poison to stun their prey before eating it. It is always best to be careful around snakes. Only an expert can tell which snakes are harmless and which are dangerous. However, a person can be careful around snakes without having a fear of them. The best advice is to find out if any poisonous snakes live in your area. In addition, if you are going camping or hiking, check to find out if the area has poisonous snakes.

If any poisonous snakes are found where you live or where you will be visiting, use photographs to learn to identify them. Also learn what steps to take when you come across a poisonous snake. With knowledge like this, you can replace your fear with caution.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Now answer Numbers 6 through 10. Base your answers on "Super Snakes."

- 6 Read the sentence from the passage.

Many people have a snake phobia because they know only the common myths about these reptiles.

The root of phobia is *phob*, meaning "fear." What is someone with a phobia **most likely** to do?

- (A) laugh
- (B) scream
- (C) sigh
- (D) yawn

- 7 Which details belong in a summary of the article? Write **three** details from the box into the chart. Not all of the details will be used.

Summary of "Super Snakes"

Details:

Snakes can push off from the ground to move.

Snakes have amazing ways to survive.

Find out what to do if you see a snake.

Few snakes are dangerous.

Many people fear snakes.

Some birds eat snakes.

- 8** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which sentence **best** summarizes the main idea of the article?

- (A)** If you are careless, you can be hurt or killed by a snake.
- (B)** Snakes have many gifts from nature, such as their skin.
- (C)** Snakes can be both dangerous and very interesting.
- (D)** Many people are very afraid of snakes.

Part B: Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "Here are some facts about snakes that will help you better understand these members of the animal kingdom living in our biosphere."
- (B)** "Snakes can go for weeks or even months between meals, and some snakes eat only once or twice a year."
- (C)** "Raccoons, birds, foxes, coyotes, and even other snakes eat snakes, and humans can be their enemies, too."
- (D)** "In addition, if you are going camping or hiking, check to find out if the area has poisonous snakes."

- 9 Read the sentence from the text.

These microscopic cells help them locate warm-blooded animals.

The word microscopic comes from the Greek roots *micro*, meaning “small,” and *scop*, meaning “see.” What does this suggest about microscopic cells?

- (A) They are hard to see.
- (B) They are easily found.
- (C) They are created by scientists.
- (D) They are always changing in size.

- 10 Which statements **best** explain what results from learning more about snakes? Select **two** choices.

- (A) The reader fears snakes less.
- (B) The reader begins to fear snakes.
- (C) The reader begins to love snakes.
- (D) The reader understands snakes better.
- (E) The reader can find snakes more easily.
- (F) The reader no longer avoids snakes in the wild.



Question	Correct Answer	Content Focus	CCSS	Complexity
1	B	Greek Roots	L.5.4b	DOK 1
2	B	Main Idea and Key Details	RI.5.2	DOK 2
3A	C	Main Idea and Key Details	RI.5.2	DOK 2
3B	A	Main Idea and Key Details/ Text Evidence	RI.5.2/ RI.5.1	DOK 2
4	see below	Greek Roots	L.5.4b	DOK 1
5A	C	Main Idea and Key Details	RI.5.2	DOK 2
5B	D	Main Idea and Key Details/ Text Evidence	RI.5.2/ RI.5.1	DOK 2
6	B	Greek Roots	L.5.4b	DOK 1
7	see below	Main Idea and Key Details	RI.5.2	DOK 2
8A	C	Main Idea and Key Details	RI.5.2	DOK 2
8B	B	Main Idea and Key Details/ Text Evidence	RI.5.2/ RI.5.1	DOK 2
9	A	Greek Roots	L.5.4b	DOK 1
10	A, D	Text Structure: Cause and Effect	RI.5.3	DOK 2
11	see below	Writing About Text	W.5.9b	DOK 4

Comprehension 2, 3A, 3B, 5A, 5B, 7, 8A, 8B, 10	/12	%
Vocabulary 1, 4, 6, 9	/8	%
Total Weekly Assessment Score	/20	%

- 4 Students should draw lines to make the following matches:
- botanical—plant
 - hydrated—water
 - cycle—circle
- 7 Students should write the following sentences to include in a summary:
- Snakes have amazing ways to survive.
 - Few snakes are dangerous.
 - Many people fear snakes.
- 11 To receive full credit for the response, the following information should be included: (Answers may vary but text evidence must be included from each article as well as an explanation of why the student finds it interesting. Examples follow.) Sequoias can be so big that tunnels can be made in fallen trees through which people can walk. Some snakes eat only once or twice a year.