

Assessment Answer Key

Raptors! The Birds of Prey

Note to teachers: The assessment should be used not as a pass-or-fail unit test but as an opportunity to diagnose students' language arts and science skills. We have designed it for students to have their copies of the "Raptors! The Birds of Prey" student magazine available for reference as they work on answering the questions. Please use the assessment diagnostically. With struggling readers, take the opportunity to review their answers individually. We hope that the answer key provides suggestions that will help you improve students' reading. The assessment also can be given aloud as part of a class discussion. Most of all, we hope the assessment—and the entire Audubon Adventures program—will develop students' appreciation for and enjoyment of the environment we share.

1. Correct answer: c. The problem caused by DDT is described on page 2 in the next-to-last paragraph of the essay that begins on the cover of the student magazine. DDT's effects are described again on page 3 in "Raptor Recovery." Options a, b, and d all have words or phrases found in the student magazine but otherwise do not convey facts about DDT's impact on raptors, so a wrong answer may indicate that a student has read the magazine, recognizes a familiar word or phrase, but is guessing at the answer. This question can serve as the starting point for a broader discussion of the way that something introduced in one part of an ecosystem can have consequences elsewhere.

2. Correct answer: a. The answer is found in the sixth sentence in "What Is a Raptor?" on page 2 of the student magazine. The other phrases are ideas introduced elsewhere, so a student who answers incorrectly may be recognizing a familiar concept or phrase. The discussion of this answer might include a review of the characteristics all raptors share: the ability to locate prey from above, seize it with sharp talons, and tear into the captured animal with a sharp, hooked beak.

3. Correct answer: d. The definition of "thermal" is given in the introduction to "Ride the Wind" on page 3 of the student magazine. The answer uses slightly different words, requiring students to extrapolate the meaning and apply it to the concept as explained in the article. Answer a is unrelated to anything in the magazine, though some students may use prior knowledge to connect the word "thermal" with the idea of warmth and then settle on "a summer day" as a plausible answer—in other words, it could be an educated guess. Answers b and c are related to the content of the magazine, but choosing either of them probably indicates guessing.

4. Correct answer: b. The raptors named in the wrong answers a, c, and d are mentioned in various places throughout the student magazine: Ospreys and owls are described as raptors on page 1 as well as in "What's on the Menu?" on page 2. American Kestrels are mentioned in "What's on the Menu" on page 2 as well. Eastern Screech Owls are mentioned on page 4 in "Raptor Rescue." Even if students are not familiar with the Brown Pelican, they should be able to arrive at the correct answer through a process of elimination or simply by reasoning about the fact that it is not mentioned in the magazine. This question can lead to a discussion of different ways of categorizing birds according to their shared characteristics—raptors/birds of prey, wading birds, water birds, songbirds, woodpeckers, ducks, and so on.

5. Correct answer: b. The answer is found on page 2 in "Bald Eagles: A Success Story." A wrong answer likely indicates guessing. There are other dates mentioned in the magazine, so students who are skimming for the answer may simply choose the first one they encounter. This is an excellent springboard to discussing the history of conservation in the United States and to explore other animals and plants that are protected, and why.

6. Answers will vary. The danger to raptors associated with the now-banned pesticide DDT and other pesticides is mentioned in three places: on page 2 in "Bald Eagles: A Success Story," on and on page 4 in "Raptor Recovery" and "Raptor Troubles." "Raptor Troubles" describes other dangers as well. This question can lead to a discussion not only of what interested people can do to help raptors, other birds and wildlife, and the natural environment, and also expand to a discussion of jobs that involve helping birds, other animals, and the environment.