3rd grade nonfiction reading worksheet

3rd grade reading · Informational Text · RI.3.1

Name _____ Date _____

For grown-ups: 11 questions from our 3rd grade nonfiction reading practice, easier ones first. Read a question aloud if your child wants that, then check together with the answer key on page 3. Read the passage before the questions that go with it. Circle the letter of the best answer, or the right word where there are no letters. Number the steps 1, 2, 3 in the order they happen.

Why Does the Moon Change Shape?

Look up at the night sky for a month and you will see the Moon change. Some nights it looks like a thin sliver. Other nights it is a bright, round circle. But the Moon is not really changing shape. It is always a ball.

The Moon does not make its own light. It shines because sunlight bounces off it. The Sun always lights up half of the Moon, just as it lights up half of Earth.

As the Moon travels around Earth, we see different amounts of its lit-up half. When we see the whole lit half, we call it a full moon. When the lit half faces away from us, we see almost nothing. That is a new moon.

It takes the Moon about 29 days to go through all of its shapes, called phases. Then the pattern starts over again.

1. **Why does the Moon shine?**

   A. It has lights inside
   B. Earth lights it up
   C. Sunlight bounces off it
   D. It is on fire

2. **What do we call the Moon when we see its whole lit-up half?**

   A. A full moon
   B. A half moon
   C. A sliver moon
   D. A new moon

3. **About how long does it take the Moon to go through all its phases?**

   A. One day
   B. One year
   C. About 29 days
   D. One week

4. **What does the word "phases" mean in this passage?**

   A. Trips that astronauts take to the Moon
   B. The colors the Moon turns
   C. The different shapes the Moon seems to have
   D. The craters on the Moon's surface

5. **What is the main idea of this paragraph?**

   > Honeybees are hard workers. One bee visits dozens of flowers in a single trip. Bees in one hive can fly a total of 55,000 miles to make just one pound of honey.

   A. Honeybees work very hard
   B. Hives are crowded
   C. Flowers need bees
   D. Honey is sweet

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3rd grade reading · questions, continued

6. **According to the text, how long is a day on Venus?**

> Venus spins very slowly. One day on Venus, one full spin, takes about 243 Earth days. That is longer than a year on Venus, which is about 225 Earth days!

A. About 225 Earth days
B. About 24 hours
C. About 243 Earth days
D. About 1 Earth year

7. **What does the word "nocturnal" mean in this text?**

> Most owls are **nocturnal**. They sleep during the day and hunt at night. Their huge eyes help them see in the dark.

A. Very large **B.** Good at flying **C.** Afraid of the dark **D.** Active at night

8. **True or false: The Eiffel Tower was planned to be permanent.**

> The Eiffel Tower in Paris was built in 1889 for a world's fair. It was supposed to be taken down after 20 years. Instead, it became useful for sending radio signals, so it was allowed to stay.

○ **True** ○ **False**

9. **Which detail supports the idea that the heart works hard?**

> Your heart is a powerful muscle. It beats about 100,000 times every day. It pumps blood to every part of your body, from your toes to your brain.

A. It beats about 100,000 times a day
B. You have toes and a brain
C. Blood is red
D. The heart is a muscle

10. **Put the steps of a butterfly's life in order.**

- [ ] The caterpillar makes a chrysalis
- [ ] A butterfly lays an egg on a leaf
- [ ] A butterfly comes out of the chrysalis
- [ ] A caterpillar hatches and eats leaves

11. **Why did the author include the last sentence?**

> Elephants use their trunks to drink, smell, grab food, and spray water. A trunk has about 40,000 muscles. Your whole body has only about 600.

A. To tell how big and heavy elephants are
B. To explain how people drink water with their hands
C. To describe how elephants use their ears
D. To show how amazing the trunk is by comparing it to our bodies

Answer key: 3rd grade nonfiction reading

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1. **C. Sunlight bounces off it**
   The Moon does not make its own light; it reflects sunlight.
2. **A. A full moon**
   When the whole lit half faces us, it is a full moon.
3. **C. About 29 days**
   The passage says the cycle takes about 29 days.
4. **C. The different shapes the Moon seems to have**
   The passage says the Moon's shapes are "called phases."
5. **A. Honeybees work very hard**
   The first sentence states the main idea, and the rest gives examples of hard work.
6. **C. About 243 Earth days**
   One full spin, a day, takes about 243 Earth days.
7. **D. Active at night**
   The next sentence explains: they sleep in the day and hunt at night. Nocturnal means active at night.
8. **False**
   It was supposed to be taken down after 20 years but was kept because it was useful.
9. **A. It beats about 100,000 times a day**
   Beating 100,000 times a day is a detail that shows how hard the heart works.
10. **Top to bottom: 3, 1, 4, 2**
    Egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, butterfly is the order of a butterfly's life cycle.
11. **D. To show how amazing the trunk is by comparing it to our bodies**
    Comparing 40,000 trunk muscles to 600 human muscles helps readers see how special the trunk is.