

Name: _____

African Wild Dogs

By Guy Belleranti



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The African wild dog is one canine that would never make a good pet.

African wild dogs live and hunt in packs. Each pack has one dominant male and one dominant female. Other pack members help protect the weakest members and the dominant pair's pups. They even spit up food for the pups to eat!

What do African wild dogs eat? Meat. Their favorite prey are medium-sized hooved animals like gazelle and impala. But they will eat smaller prey too. Using their long legs and large lungs, they can chase prey for several miles until it tires. This, along with the pack's teamwork,

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leads to hunting success 60 to 90% of the time. That's the best hunting success rate of any land mammal!

African wild dogs weigh about 40 to 80 pounds (18 to 36 kilograms). That's about the weight of a Dalmatian.

Their fur commonly has patches of brown, yellow, black, and

they live mostly in small parts of



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living in forests are mostly brown with some black and white.

An important feature is their large, rounded, bat-like ears. The ears help them hear prey far away. The ears also act like air conditioners. As air moves over the ears' blood vessels, heat is carried away.

African wild dogs were once found in much of Africa. Now

of their wild habitat. This loss of space leads to increasing conflict with people, domesticated dogs, and livestock. As a result, African wild dogs are hunted as pests.

One conservation method being used is placing radio collars on African wild dogs. The collars provide information on the animals' movements. This helps people avoid them, which reduces conflict.

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1. Which claim about African wild dogs is true?
 - a. All pack members have pups.
 - b. Their habitat has been greatly reduced.
 - c. Their hunting success rate is similar to other mammals.
 - d. They use their ears to keep warm.
2. Which statement best describes the main idea of the second paragraph?
 - a. Having very few pups is better for pack survival.
 - b. Some African wild dogs are too weak to protect themselves.



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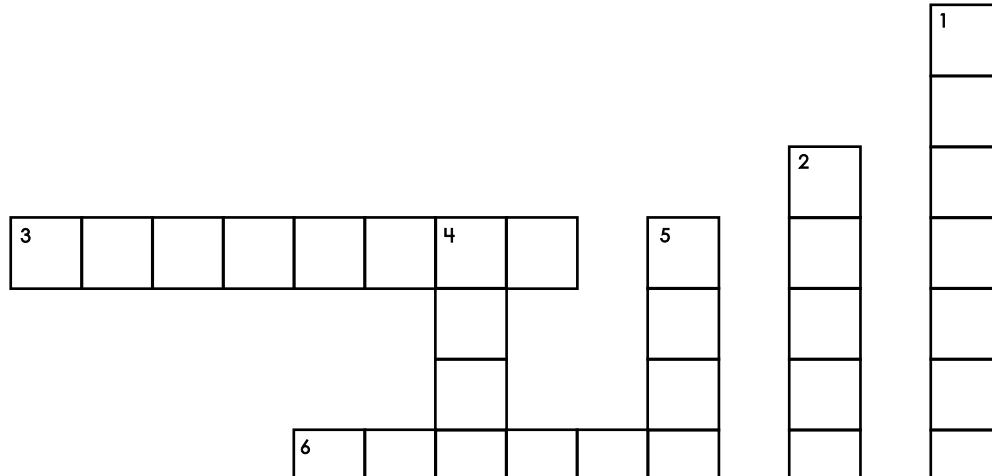
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- b. show
- c. trait
- d. limb

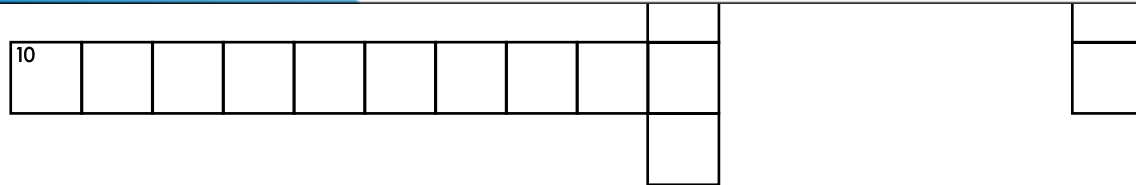
4. Which of the following is *not* a reasonable inference you can make?
 - a. Teamwork raises animals' rates of hunting success
 - b. African wild dogs live in places that get very warm.
 - c. Lions, hyenas, and African wild dogs share similar territory.
 - d. African wild dog pups never drink milk.
5. Other than their legs and lungs, what are two things that help African wild dogs be successful hunters? How?

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Down:

- 1. under threat of going extinct
- 2. in charge; more powerful than others
- 4. member of the animal group that includes dogs and wolves
- 5. tamed by humans
- 7. to guard or keep safe

Across:

- 3. trouble between opposing parties
- 6. unlike anything else
- 8. nickname for African wild dogs
- 9. the act of keeping and protecting something, especially nature
- 10. used to blend in with surroundings

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In the article, "African Wild Dogs," you read about how African wild dogs look and behave.

The author starts the article by claiming African wild dogs would never make good pets. Do you agree? Use information from the text to support an argument for why you think they would or would not make good pets.



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ANSWER KEY

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successful hunters? How?

Accept any two: their coats, since they provide camouflage; their ears, since they let them hear prey far away; teamwork, since it lets them take down prey they couldn't on their own

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