The Rabbit and the Hare

by Guy Belleranti

Did you know that jackrabbits aren’t rabbits? They’re actually called hares. Hares are close relatives of rabbits, and they belong to the same animal family. Since they’re members of the same family, there are many ways rabbits and hares are alike. Both are mammals. They both twitch their noses when using their excellent senses of smell. Both animals are nocturnal too. This means they’re most active from dusk until dawn. Their large eyes help them see in the dark.

Rabbits and hares are also alike in what they eat. They’re plant-eaters, or herbivores. They like eating grass, herbs, twigs, and bark. They also love tasting things in people’s gardens!

Rabbits and hares have some big differences too. One of the biggest differences have longer hind legs. Rabbits can move quickly, but the longer-legged hares move even faster. Some jackrabbits can take ten-foot leaps in bursts of forty miles an hour! Combined with their zigzag style of running, this helps them escape predators.

Except for the cottontail rabbit, rabbits spend most of the day in underground burrows. Hares spend the day above ground hidden in vegetation or in nests.

Rabbits are much more social than hares. They often live in groups. Because of their more social natures, some types of rabbits have become common pets. Hares, however, dislike being held and do not make good pets.
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Answer the following questions based on what you read in the article.

1. What is a rabbit’s young called? _________________________
   What is a hare’s young called? _________________________

2. Fill out the following chart to show three ways rabbits and hares are different and three ways they are the same.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rabbits</th>
<th>Hares</th>
<th>Both</th>
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3. Why do rabbits make better pets than hares?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

4. What is unique about the way jackrabbits escape from predators?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. ____ i ____ a g
   hint: alternating turns to the left and the right (4th paragraph)

2. ____ e ____ b ____ ____ r e s
   hint: animals that only eat plants in their diet (2nd paragraph)

5. ____ r e ____ a t ____ s
   hint: animals that hunt down and eat other animals (4th paragraph)

6. ____ o ____ ____ u r ____ a l
   hint: active at night (2nd paragraph)

7. ____ u ____ __________
   hint: twilight; the time of evening after sunset and before nightfall (2nd paragraph)

8. ____ e ____ e ____ a t ____ o ____
   hint: plant life (5th paragraph)
In the article, “The Rabbit and the Hare,” you learned that rabbits make better pets than hares.

On the lines below, describe why rabbits make better pets than hares. Also, explain whether or not you would want a rabbit for a pet and why.
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Answer the following questions based on what you read in the article.

1. What is a rabbit's young called?  
   kits or kittens

2. What is a hare's young called?  
   leverets

3. Fill out the following chart to show three ways rabbits and hares are different and three ways they are the same.

   Accept any of the following similarities: mammals; excellent sense of smell; nocturnal; herbivores

   Accept any of the following differences: rabbit babies are born with no fur and eyes closed, while hare babies are born with fur and eyes open; rabbits have large ears, while hares have larger ears; rabbits run fast, while hares can run faster; rabbits live in burrows, while hares live above ground; rabbits are social, while hares are not social

4. Why do rabbits make better pets than hares?  
   Rabbits make better pets than hares because they are more social.

5. What is unique about the way jackrabbits escape from predators?  
   Jackrabbits can run up to forty miles per hour with ten-foot leaps. This, combined with running in a zigzag pattern, helps them escape from predators.
Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. zigzag
   hint: alternating turns to the left and the right

2. herbivores
   hint: animals that only eat plants in their diet

3. burrows
   hint: tunnels or holes where small animals live

4. mammals
   hint: animals that give birth to live young, have fur or hair, and feed their babies milk

5. predators
   hint: animals that hunt down and eat other animals

6. nocturnal
   hint: active at night

7. dusk
   hint: twilight; the time of evening after sunset and before nightfall

8. vegetation
   hint: plant life