

Vocabulary in Nonfiction

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

In nonfiction, you'll meet special words about a topic — like “habitat” in a science article. Use the other sentences around the word as CLUES to figure out the meaning. The text often defines or hints at the word right next to it.

PART 1 — READ

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Animals of the Desert

A desert is a very dry place that gets little rain. Many people think deserts are always hot, but some deserts are cold at night. The plants and animals that live there have special features that help them survive in this tough habitat.

Camels are well known for living in hot deserts. Their wide feet help them walk on loose sand. They store fat in their humps, which gives them energy when food and water are scarce. Camels can also drink huge amounts of water at one time and use it slowly over many days.

Smaller desert animals stay safe by being nocturnal — they are active at night, when the air is cooler. During the heat of the day, lizards and snakes find shade or burrow into the sand to avoid losing too much water. These adaptations help desert animals live where many other animals cannot.

PART 2 — PRACTICE

Choose the best answer for each question. Show your work for short answers.

- In paragraph 1, the word **habitat** means —
 - a tool used to dig in sand.
 - the place where a plant or animal lives.
 - a special kind of food.
 - a long trip across the desert.
- What does the word **scarce** mean in paragraph 2?
 - fresh and ready to eat
 - hard to find or in short supply
 - easy to carry on a long walk
 - stored in a special place



3. In paragraph 3, the word **nocturnal** means —
- A. sleeping all day and all night
 - B. active mostly at night
 - C. living near a river
 - D. very fast and strong
4. What does **burrow** mean in this sentence: “Lizards and snakes burrow into the sand to avoid losing water.”
- A. climb up onto a high rock
 - B. dig into the ground
 - C. look around carefully
 - D. drink from a pool of water
5. Which word in the passage means “special body parts or behaviors that help an animal live”?
- A. features
 - B. humps
 - C. shade
 - D. adaptations
6. The phrase **tough habitat** in paragraph 1 means the desert is —
- A. a cozy place to live.
 - B. a place that is hard to live in.
 - C. a popular tourist spot.
 - D. a place with lots of food.
7. Read this sentence: *Camels store fat in their humps.* What does **store** mean here?
- A. save up to use later
 - B. buy from a market
 - C. throw away
 - D. show off to others
8. Find the word in paragraph 2 that helps you understand **scarce**:
- A. “wide”
 - B. “fat”
 - C. “humps”
 - D. “scarce” means food and water are not easy to find — the cause of needing stored fat
9. Write one sentence using the word **adaptation** based on the passage.



10. Why are special words like *habitat*, *adaptation*, and *nocturnal* useful in this passage?
- A. They make the passage sound funny.
 - B. They are short and easy to spell.
 - C. They name important ideas in a science topic clearly.
 - D. They show the author has been to the desert.



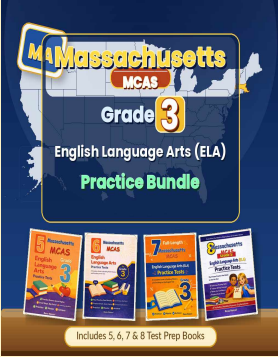
Answer Keys

<p>1 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>2 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>3 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>4 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>5 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input checked="" type="radio"/> D</p>	<p>6 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>7 <input checked="" type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>8 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input checked="" type="radio"/> D</p> <p>9 <input type="text" value="See below"/></p> <p>10 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input checked="" type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p>
---	--

Explanations	
1. B	The sentence calls the desert a “tough habitat” for animals and plants — so habitat = place where they live. A, C, D do not fit the sentence.
2. B	The sentence says camels use their humps when food and water are scarce — meaning hard to find. A,C,D do not fit the cause-and-effect of needing stored fat.
3. B	The text defines it next to the word: nocturnal — active at night when the air is cooler. A is opposite; C and D are unrelated.
4. B	Burrowing INTO sand means digging in. A is the opposite direction; C and D do not match the action.
5. D	Paragraph 3 ends with “these adaptations.” Features is close but more general; humps and shade are specific things.
6. B	“Tough” = hard, difficult. The whole passage shows why life is hard in deserts. The others contradict the text.
7. A	Store = save up (the camel uses the fat for energy later). B is the other meaning of “store” (a shop); C and D are opposite or unrelated.
8. D	Right after “scarce,” the text explains that the fat gives them energy when food and water are hard to find. The other words don’t define scarce.
9.	Answer: Example: A camel’s wide feet are an adaptation that helps it walk on sand. Any correct use of the word with a desert-animal example.
10. C	Domain-specific words name science ideas precisely. A, B, D are not why the writer picks these words.



Want Even More Practice? Check Out Our Other Massachusetts MCAS ELA Test Books!




Includes 5, 6, 7 & 8 Test Prep Books

Massachusetts MCAS Grade 3 ELA Preparation Bundle

26 full-length practice tests across four books (5 + 6 + 7 + 8)

No repeated questions — maximum practice value!

▼ DOWNLOAD INSTANTLY ▼



SCAN ME

Point your phone camera at the code · instant access to all four books

26 Tests! 4 Books One Bundle

Important: All our test books contain **unique, completely different tests** from each other! Each book offers fresh practice questions — no repeats!

<h4 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">5 Practice Tests</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 5 complete practice tests with detailed explanations ✓ Perfect foundation for MCAS ELA prep ✓ Builds confidence and test-taking skills ✓ High-quality questions aligned with standards <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Start your practice journey!</p>	<h4 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">6 Practice Tests</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 6 complete practice tests with detailed explanations ✓ Unique tests — different from the 5 tests book ✓ Perfect for more practice after mastering 5 tests ✓ Same high-quality questions aligned with standards <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Take your practice to the next level!</p>	<h4 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">7 Practice Tests</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 7 complete practice tests for deeper preparation ✓ Unique tests — different from 5 and 6 tests books ✓ Builds stamina with full-length practice ✓ Aligned to Grade 3 MCAS ELA standards <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Maximum preparation power!</p>	<h4 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">8 Practice Tests</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 8 complete practice tests — our largest book ✓ Unique tests — different from 5, 6 and 7 books ✓ Great for final review before test day ✓ Builds true test stamina and confidence <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Be fully prepared!</p>
---	---	---	--

Get the bundle at [EffortlessMath.com](https://www.EffortlessMath.com) — scan the QR code above to open the product page.

