

Name _____

Date _____

Sample Answers

Compare and Contrast Main Ideas

Part 1: The Platypus



The platypus is one of the most unusual animals in the world. Found mainly in freshwater habitats of eastern Australia, the platypus looks like a combination of several other animals. It has webbed feet and a flat bill, like a duck. Its tail is wide and flat, like the tail of a beaver. And its body is covered in brown waterproof fur, much like the fur of an otter.

The platypus hunts for food underwater. It uses its webbed feet and wide tail to move around in the water. The platypus eats insects, shellfish, and worms. Active mainly at night and during the early morning, the platypus uses its flat bill to dig and search for food.

The male platypus is bigger than the female, and the male has sharp, venomous stingers on the heels of its rear feet. The platypus is also one of only two mammals that lays eggs! Most mammals give birth to live young, while birds and reptiles typically lay eggs. The platypus truly is one of a kind!

What is the main idea of this passage? Write your answer in a complete sentence.

The main idea of this passage is that the platypus is an unusual animal that looks like a combination of other animals.

List two or more important details that support the main idea.

- The platypus looks like a duck, a beaver, and an otter combined.**
- The male platypus has sharp, venomous stingers on the heels of its rear feet.**
- The platypus is one of only two mammals that lays eggs.**

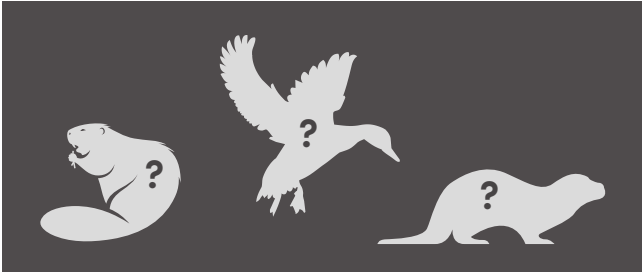
Name _____

Date _____

Sample Answers

Compare and Contrast Main Ideas

Part 2: A Strange Creature



Last summer I went to visit my uncle who lives in Australia. While I was there, we went fishing early one morning at the river near his house. As we were getting our fishing poles ready, I saw something out of the corner of my eye. It looked like the tail of a beaver!

About thirty seconds later, I saw a duck's bill come up out of the water near where I saw the beaver. But as it began to bring its head out of the water, I saw that it had fur instead of feathers! I rubbed my eyes in confusion. The sun wasn't up all the way yet, so it was still a little dark. Maybe it was a beaver after all?

When it finally stepped out of the water, I saw that it really did have a bill and webbed feet like a duck. But then I saw that it had four feet instead of two. Its smooth fur looked like an otter's, but its body was much shorter. I stared in amazement as the strange creature quickly disappeared into its home in the ground. I'd never seen anything like that before!

What is the main idea of this passage? Write your answer in a complete sentence.

The main idea of this passage is that a boy saw an unusual animal while fishing with his uncle in Australia.

List two or more important details that support the main idea.

- While fishing early in the morning, he saw what looked like the tail of a beaver.**
- Then he saw what looked like a duck's bill come up out of the water.**
- The animal came out of the water, and it had smooth fur and four legs.**

Do you think these two passages are talking about the same animal? Why or why not? Use details from the texts to support your answer.

Yes, these two passages are both about a platypus. They both talk about an animal that has a flat bill and webbed feet like a duck, a flat tail like a beaver, and smooth fur like an otter. The first text tells that the platypus lives near freshwater in Australia, and the second text takes place at a river in Australia. The first text says the platypus is active at night and early in the morning, and the second text takes place early in the morning.