

Informational Reading
Comprehension**Invasive Species**

Answer the questions about “Invasive Species.” **Sample answers**

1. What central idea does the author convey in paragraph 2?

Invasive species cause harm to native ecosystems by upsetting the natural ecological balance.

2. In the second paragraph, what does the word **benign** mean?

Benign means mild or not threatening.

3. List **four** ways that the introduction of a new species into an ecosystem might be harmful.

1. **The new species could eat native species.**

2. **The new species might eat the native species' food.**

3. **The new species could reproduce faster than the native species.**

4. **The new species could alter the environment.**

4. Describe the distinction between non-native and invasive species.

Invasive species are non-native species that cause harm to existing ecosystems.

Not all non-native species cause harm. In fact, some are beneficial to their new environments.

5. What is true of most non-native species in the United States?

a. They are harmful to native ecosystems.

b. They were introduced in the 1600s.

c. They have no significant negative impact.

d. They reproduce and spread very quickly.

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- 6. What connections and distinctions exist between honey bees and zebra mussels in the United States?**

Honey bees and zebra mussels are both non-native species introduced to the United States. However, honey bees were introduced intentionally as beneficial pollinators of food crops, while zebra mussels were introduced accidentally and are harmful to their new ecosystems.

- 7. Compare the impact of nutria and zebra mussels in the United States.**

Nutria and zebra mussels are both invasive species that reproduce quickly and impact native water ecosystems negatively.

- 8. Cite two specific details that the author uses to acknowledge that people are responsible for the presence of invasive species in the United States.**

“These tiny creatures ... hitched a ride on the hulls of container ships from Europe...”
“Nutria were imported from South America by fur farmers in the 1880s.”

- 9. Summarize the efforts that people are making to combat invasive species.**

People are educating others and making rules about how to keep invasive species from spreading. There are even teams that work to eliminate invasive species as soon as they are detected in national refuges. Dogs can search them out, and people are starting to eat invasive species.

- 10. What alternative approach to dealing with invasive species does the author put forward?**

- a. Deploy permanent strike teams to all national parks and wildlife preserves.
- b. Ban travel from all countries with potentially harmful species.
- c. Bring in beneficial non-native species to fight off the invasive species.
- d. Find ways to live with invasive species while mitigating their harmful effects.**