

Read this story to find out about a harbor seal pup that has a special problem.

In the sea, a harbor seal pup learns to catch and eat fish by watching its mother. By the time it is weaned, at the age of four or five weeks, it is able to feed on its own.

Without a mother, and living temporarily in captivity, Pearson had to be taught what a fish was and how to swallow it. Eventually, he would have to learn to catch one himself.

Holly started his training with a small herring—an oily fish which is a favorite with seals. Gently, she opened his mouth and slipped the fish in headfirst. Harbor seals have sharp teeth for catching fish but no teeth for grinding and chewing. They swallow their food whole.

But Pearson didn't seem to understand what he was supposed to do. He bit down on the fish and then spit it out. Holly tried again. This time, Pearson got the idea. He swallowed the herring in one gulp and looked eagerly for more.

Within a week, he was being hand-fed a pound of fish a day in addition to his formula. This new diet made him friskier than ever. He chased the other pups in the outside pen. He plunged into the small wading pool and rolled in the shallow water, splashing both seals and people.

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Source: *Pearson, A Harbor Seal Pup*, by Susan Meyers (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1980), pp. 15-16.

[Note: Do not count as a miscue mispronunciation of the name Pearson. You may pronounce this name for the student if needed.]

SCORING AID

Word Recognition

%-Miscues

99-3

95-11

90-22

85-33

Comprehension

%-Errors

100-0

90-1

80-2

70-3

60-4

50-5

40-6

30-7

20-8

10-9

0-10

214 Words
(for Word Recognition)

217 Words
(for Rate)

WPM

13020

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| ___ main idea | 1. What is this story about? (teaching a harbor seal pup to catch and eat fish; teaching Pearson to catch and eat fish) |
| ___ detail | 2. How does a harbor seal pup learn to catch and eat fish in the sea? (by watching its mother) |
| ___ vocabulary | 3. What does the word "temporarily" mean? (for a short time; not permanently) |
| ___ vocabulary | 4. What does the word "captivity" mean? (the condition of being held as a prisoner or captive; confinement; a condition in which a person or animal is not free) |
| ___ cause and effect/
inference | 5. What caused Pearson to need to be taught what a fish was and how to swallow it? (He didn't have a mother to show him.) |
| ___ inference | 6. What is an oily fish that seals like? (herring) |
| ___ cause and effect/
inference | 7. What causes harbor seals to swallow their food whole? (They have no teeth for grinding and chewing.) |
| ___ sequence | 8. Name, in order, the two things that Pearson did the first time Holly put a fish in his mouth. (bit down on the fish and then spit it out) |
| ___ inference | 9. How fast did Pearson learn how to eat a fish? (He learned on the second try.) |
| ___ detail | 10. What made Pearson get friskier? (his new diet of fish and formula; his new diet) |

Read this selection to find out about one activity that is common in New Zealand.

New Zealand has a mild and rainy climate. This makes it a good place for sheep ranching. Even the steep sides of the mountains are used. Here, sure-footed sheep can graze where farm machinery cannot go.

New Zealand has about eighteen times as many sheep as it has people. The sheep are raised on large ranches called stations. During the summer, the sheep feed on the lush grass in the mountains. In late fall, they must be rounded up, or mustered. Then they are herded down to spend the winter months on the warmer lower slopes.

On a large station, thousands of sheep may be scattered over many mountain acres. The musterers cannot use horses on the steep mountainsides. With the help of well-trained dogs, they herd the flock, or mob, on foot.

The real work, however, begins in spring. Once again, the sheep are mustered. This time the mobs are herded down from the lower slopes to fenced-in pens. The lambs to be fattened for meat are separated from the others. The remaining thousands are moved into sheds where their thick wool is clipped, or sheared. This job is done by workers called shearers.

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Source: "New Zealand," in William K. Durr and others, *Explorations* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), pp. 388-389.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| ___ main idea | 1. What is the purpose of this story?
(to tell what sheep ranching in New Zealand is like) |
| ___ detail | 2. What kind of climate does New Zealand have? (mild and rainy) |
| ___ vocabulary | 3. What does the word "stations" mean in this article?
(large ranches where sheep are raised) |
| ___ vocabulary | 4. What does the word "mustered" mean in this article? (rounded up) |
| ___ inference | 5. What is the temperature like high in the mountains?
(It is cooler than it is on the lower slopes.) |
| ___ cause and effect/
inference | 6. What causes the workers to muster the sheep on foot?
(Horses can't keep their footing on the steep mountainsides.) |
| ___ detail | 7. What kind of help do the musterers have in herding the sheep?
(well-trained dogs; dogs) |
| ___ vocabulary | 8. What is a flock of sheep sometimes called? (a mob) |
| ___ sequence | 9. Name, in order, three things that happen when the sheep are mustered in the spring.
(They are herded into pens; then lambs to be fattened for meat are separated from the others; the others are moved into sheds; then they are sheared.) [Accept any three of the four items as long as they are in order.] |
| ___ detail | 10. Who clips the sheep's thick wool? (workers called shearers; shearers) |

SCORING AID

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- 95-10
- 90-20
- 85-30

Comprehension

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195 Words
(for Word Recognition)

195 Words
(for Rate)

WPM

11700