Name: Date: Score: / 6

Sharks: Reading Comprehension

Nonfiction: Animals · about 200 words

Read the passage. Then answer each question. Circle the best answer or write your answer on the lines.

Sharks

Sharks have swum in Earth's oceans for more than 400 million years, which means they were around long before the dinosaurs. Today, there are more than 500 kinds of sharks. The smallest, the dwarf lanternshark, could fit in your hand. The largest, the whale shark, can grow longer than a school bus. Even so, the whale shark is gentle and eats mostly tiny plankton.

Sharks are fish, but their skeletons are not made of bone. Instead, they are made of cartilage, the same bendy material in your nose and ears. This makes sharks lighter and more flexible. Many sharks have rows of teeth. When a tooth falls out, another moves forward to replace it. Some sharks lose and replace thousands of teeth in a lifetime.

Sharks have amazing senses. They can smell tiny amounts of blood in the water. They also have special organs that sense the electric signals given off by other animals' muscles.

Although many people fear sharks, shark attacks on humans are very rare. In fact, people are a much greater danger to sharks. Overfishing kills millions of sharks every year. Because sharks help keep ocean food webs balanced, protecting them helps protect the whole ocean.

1. **Main idea:** What is this passage mostly about?
   A. the life of dinosaurs B. how whales eat C. facts about sharks and why they need protection D. how to swim safely

2. **Detail:** How long have sharks lived in Earth's oceans?
   A. 50 years B. since the dinosaurs died C. more than 400 million years D. about 1,000 years

3. **Detail:** What are shark skeletons made of?
   A. shell B. metal C. cartilage D. bone

4. **Detail:** What does the whale shark eat?
   A. seaweed only B. mostly tiny plankton C. big fish D. people

5. **Vocabulary:** Flexible means...
   A. able to bend easily B. very heavy C. full of teeth D. very old

6. **Inference:** Why does protecting sharks help the whole ocean?

ANSWER KEY

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