Name: Date: Score: / 6

Humpback Whales: Reading Comprehension

Nonfiction: Animals · about 245 words

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

🐋 Humpback Whales

Humpback whales are famous for their songs, their acrobatic leaps, and their incredible journeys. Adults can grow to about 50 feet long and weigh around 40 tons, about as much as several school buses.

Despite their size, humpbacks eat some of the smallest animals in the ocean: tiny shrimp-like creatures called krill, as well as small fish. Humpbacks are baleen whales. Instead of teeth, they have hundreds of plates of baleen hanging from their upper jaws. Baleen is made of keratin, the same material as your fingernails. A humpback gulps a huge mouthful of water and food, then pushes the water out through the baleen, trapping the food inside.

Humpbacks sometimes work together using a clever hunting method called bubble-net feeding. A group of whales swims in a circle below a school of fish, blowing bubbles. The rising bubbles form a "net" that traps the fish. Then the whales swim up through the middle with their mouths wide open.

Male humpbacks sing long, complex songs that can last up to 20 minutes and be repeated for hours. All the males in an area sing a similar song, which slowly changes over time. Scientists are still studying why they sing.

Each year, many humpbacks migrate thousands of miles between cold feeding waters near the poles and warm tropical waters where they give birth. Some travel more than 5,000 miles one way. Humpbacks were once hunted almost to extinction, but thanks to international protections, many populations have recovered.

1. **Main idea:** What is this passage mostly about?

   A. the history of whale hunting B. how to go whale watching

   C. how humpback whales eat, sing, and travel D. life in tropical waters

2. **Detail:** What do humpback whales mostly eat?

   A. seals B. seaweed C. sharks D. krill and small fish

3. **Vocabulary:** Baleen is...

   A. a type of tooth B. a whale song C. a kind of krill D. plates in a whale's mouth that trap food

4. **Detail:** What is bubble-net feeding?

   A. Whales clean their skin. B. Whales breathe underwater. C. Whales play with bubbles.

   D. Whales blow bubbles in a circle to trap fish.

5. **Detail:** Why do humpbacks travel to warm tropical waters?

   A. to find krill B. to sing C. to escape ice D. to give birth

6. **Inference:** Why have many humpback populations recovered?

ANSWER KEY

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