Otter Survival Tools

Find evidence that body structures help an animal survive and grow.

L.3.1.1 "Examine evidence to communicate information that the internal and external structures of animals (e.g., heart, stomach, bone, lung, brain, skin, ears, appendages) function to support survival, growth, and behavior."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each body structure named in the passage. Circle the words that show how each structure helps the otter live, grow, or act.

A River Otter Finds Food

1. A river otter slips into a stream after a fish. Its feet have skin between the toes, called webbing. When the otter spreads its toes, the webbed feet push against the water like paddles. Its long, strong tail helps it turn. These outside body parts help the otter swim after food and steer away from danger in the water.

2. The water is cloudy, so the fish is hard to see. The otter's whiskers feel tiny movements in the water when the fish swims nearby. The otter turns toward the moving fish and snaps it up. Whiskers are outside structures that help the otter find food even when its eyes cannot see well. Finding food helps the otter stay alive.

3. The otter cannot stay underwater forever. Its lungs take in air when it comes to the surface. Its heart pumps blood that carries oxygen from the lungs to the rest of its body. After the otter eats the fish, its stomach helps break the food down. The food gives a young otter materials and energy to grow. Lungs, heart, and stomach are inside structures.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What do the otter's webbed feet and tail do in the water? Explain how each part helps it survive.

2. How do the otter's whiskers help it find food when the water is cloudy? Use a detail from the passage.

3. Why does the otter come to the surface for air? Explain what its lungs and heart do.

4. How does the otter's stomach help a young otter grow after it eats a fish?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A young otter chases a fish through cloudy water, catches it, and eats it. Write three sentences explaining how a sensing structure, a swimming structure, and an inside structure work together to help it find food and grow. Use a detail from the passage for each structure.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 3 · L.3.1.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each body structure named in the passage. Circle the words that show how each structure helps the otter live, grow, or act. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What do the otter's webbed feet and tail do in the water? Explain how each part helps it survive.	**Webbed feet push against the water so the otter can swim after food. Its tail helps it turn and steer away from danger.**
2	How do the otter's whiskers help it find food when the water is cloudy? Use a detail from the passage.	**The whiskers feel tiny movements made by a nearby fish. The otter turns toward the fish to catch it.**
3	Why does the otter come to the surface for air? Explain what its lungs and heart do.	**Its lungs take in air at the surface. Its heart pumps blood that carries oxygen from the lungs to the rest of its body.**
4	How does the otter's stomach help a young otter grow after it eats a fish?	**The stomach helps break down the fish. The food gives the young otter materials and energy to grow.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The otter's whiskers feel the fish moving nearby, helping it find the fish in cloudy water. Its webbed feet push against the water so it can swim after the fish. After it eats, its stomach helps break down the fish, and the food gives it materials and energy to grow.

Accept other passage-supported choices for the swimming structure, such as the tail. Look for a clear link between what each structure does and how it helps the otter find food or grow.