

Born or Taught?

Compare animal behaviors by looking for experience and practice.

S5L2.a "Ask questions to compare and contrast instincts and learned behaviors."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline facts that show a behavior happens without practice. Circle facts that show a behavior needs experience or practice, then write 1 beside a sentence that tells how the two kinds are alike.

Animal Actions Have Different Beginnings

- ① On a natural beach at night, newly hatched sea turtles crawl toward the brighter, open horizon over the ocean. The landward horizon is usually darker. No adult turtle teaches them this action. They also use their flippers to dig through sand and move toward water. These actions are instincts, behaviors animals are born able to do. Artificial lights near beaches can confuse hatchlings and send them inland.
- ② At an aquarium, a young sea lion watches a trainer tap a target with a pole. At first, the sea lion does not touch it. After many practice sessions and fish rewards, it swims to the target when it sees the pole. This is a learned behavior because experience changed what the animal does. Another sea lion can learn the same response by practicing with a trainer.
- ③ Instincts and learned behaviors can both help animals survive, but they begin in different ways. A hatchling turtle can head toward the brighter ocean horizon without practice. A sea lion needs practice before responding to a trainer's target. Scientists ask questions such as, "Was the behavior present before experience?" and "Did practice or teaching change it?" These questions help them compare behaviors carefully.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What detail shows that moving toward the brighter ocean horizon is an instinct for a hatchling turtle?

2 How does the sea lion's target response begin differently from the turtle's movement toward the brighter ocean horizon?

3 What is one way instincts and learned behaviors are alike, according to the passage?

4 Name the two questions scientists can ask to compare whether a behavior is instinctive or learned.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose an animal behavior that is not in the passage. In three sentences, describe it, classify it as an instinct or learned behavior with evidence, and compare it to one behavior in the passage. Then write two original questions comparing how experience affects that behavior and one passage behavior. Ask your questions to a partner or teacher and explain what observation or record would help answer each. Do not just copy the two scientist questions.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline facts that show a behavior happens without practice. Circle facts that show a behavior needs experience or practice, then write 1 beside a sentence that tells how the two kinds are alike. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What detail shows that moving toward the brighter ocean horizon is an instinct for a hatchling turtle?	No adult turtle teaches the hatchling, and it moves toward the brighter ocean horizon without practice.
2	How does the sea lion's target response begin differently from the turtle's movement toward the brighter ocean horizon?	The sea lion learns its response through practice sessions and fish rewards. The turtle's movement begins without teaching or practice.
3	What is one way instincts and learned behaviors are alike, according to the passage?	Both can help animals survive.
4	Name the two questions scientists can ask to compare whether a behavior is instinctive or learned.	Was the behavior present before experience? Did practice or teaching change it?

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A young spider can spin a web without another spider showing it how. This is an instinct because it begins without teaching or practice. It is like the turtle's movement toward the brighter ocean horizon because both behaviors begin without experience. My questions are: How would first web-building attempts by untrained young spiders compare with a sea lion's first target-response attempts? How does repeating an activity affect web-building and the sea lion's target response? I would compare dated records of first attempts and later attempts, including whether any teaching occurred.

Accept accurate animal behaviors that are clearly classified with evidence about whether teaching, practice, or prior experience is needed. The comparison must state a similarity or difference with a behavior from the passage. Provide extra paper and a partner or teacher for the two questions. Require two learner-created questions that compare beginnings or effects of practice across instinctive and learned behavior, plus relevant evidence suggestions; do not accept copied scientist questions alone. A question may investigate uncertainty rather than assume every detail is known. Check the actual questions asked, not a promise to ask later. The sample spider comparison is preserved; its questions and evidence suggestions are examples, not collected results.