

Name _____

(Skill: Reading Comprehension)

Read the story and answer the questions.

Ecosystems

Human beings, plants and animals are all part of the biosphere. The biosphere is the region on or near the surface of the Earth where living things can survive. There are millions of species of plants and animals in the biosphere. A habitat is a place where each species lives. Habitats of plants and animals often overlap, creating a larger area called a biological community. The biological community is where tens, or even hundreds, of species live together.

Living things adapt to their environments in many different ways. In polar regions, seals grow thick, warm coats to protect themselves against cold and ice. Animals that live in severe cold climates hibernate (sleep for long periods of time) to conserve energy. They also store food during times of warmer weather for the cold winter months ahead. In deserts, cacti store water so that they have moisture during periods when it does not rain. Desert animals learn how to burrow underground to avoid the scorching sun. These burrowing animals will move around at night when it is cooler.

1. What is a biosphere?

2. How many kinds of species live in the biosphere? (Circle the answer.)

- A. hundreds
- B. thousands
- C. millions

3. What is a biological community?

4. Give two examples of how an animal might adapt to a cold environment.

5. Why do burrowing animals move around at night?

6. A word that means "to sleep for long periods of time" is: (Circle the answer.)

- A. seal
- B. burrow
- C. hibernate