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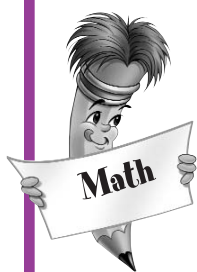
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BEST FRIENDS



MANY PEOPLE KNOW THAT DOGS ARE PEOPLE’S “OLDEST FRIENDS.” BUT DO YOU KNOW FOR HOW LONG THEY HAVE BEEN BEST BUDDIES? DOGS HAVE LIVED WITH PEOPLE FOR MORE THAN 12,000 YEARS. THEY HAVE BEEN HELPERS, HUNTERS, GUARDS, AND FRIENDS. TODAY’S DOGS ARE SIMILAR TO THEIR EARLY ANCESTORS IN MANY WAYS. HOWEVER, THEY ARE ALSO VERY DIFFERENT.

Dogs are related to foxes, wolves, and jackals. The first tame dogs probably wandered near campfires. They might have been attracted by the smell of roasting food. Early people discovered that these wild creatures could become friendly. They also learned that dogs could be helpful.

The first tame dogs were bred to be hunters. Early people chose dogs with sharp senses of smell, hearing, and sight. Sharp eyes, sensitive ears, and keen noses were useful for early hunting dogs.

Over time, people developed new breeds. These new breeds each had their own specialties. Some dogs became watchdogs for flocks of sheep, goats, and cattle. Others herded the livestock. Still others were good at fishing or hunting particular animals. Some even pulled carts, like ponies.

Today, there are more than 400 breeds of dogs. They range in size from jumbo wolfhounds and St. Bernards to pint-sized Chihuahuas and Pekingeses. Large or small, furry or shorthaired, they are all related to the first dogs.

Like the first dogs, today’s breeds were developed for special purposes. Retrievers were bred to retrieve birds that hunters had shot. A pointer spots and points at birds

so hunters can aim at them. The word terrier comes from the French. It means “the earth.” A terrier is a dog who digs into the ground to find small animals. Does your dog like to dig holes? It just might be a terrier!

Some dog breeds have even more unusual beginnings. Have you heard of a dachshund? Its name in German means “badger dog.” Dachshunds were first developed to chase badgers down their holes. The dachshund’s slender body and long nose fit perfectly down the holes. Today, few dachshunds actually chase badgers. But they do make good pets.

Another type of dog was bred to pull sleds through snow and ice. Others were bred to fight, help owners catch fish, or rescue drowning sailors. There are even dogs who were bred to do nothing—except look cute! The Shih Tzu, Pomeranian, and Maltese are tiny dogs. Many people think they are just right for sitting on someone’s lap!

All dogs have at least one thing in common. They are happiest in a group. Dogs don’t live in packs, like their early ancestors or today’s wolves. A dog’s family becomes its pack. Dogs can see their owners as leaders of their pack. They want to please you, the leader. That’s why dogs make such fine pets!

COMPREHENSION



KNOW THE SKILL: **COMPARING AND CONTRASTING**

Passages often compare people, places, situations, or things. The passage might explain how two things are similar by comparing or how they are different by contrasting.

DURING THE TEST

A test question may ask you to compare or contrast two or more things. Start by rereading the passage. Look for sentences that explain how the two things are the same or how they are different. The question could be multiple choice or true/false. It might also ask you to write a few sentences. Passages that compare and contrast two things often use key words and phrases like *in contrast to*, *but*, *however*, *like*, and *unlike*. Watch for them!

TEST EXAMPLE

- 1 Write two or more sentences that compare the first dogs with today's dogs.

THINK ABOUT THE ANSWER

Here's one correct answer: *The first dogs and today's dogs are both pets. Both the first dogs and today's dogs were bred for special purposes. Both are happiest living in packs, either with other dogs or with people.* This answer describes several similarities. It does not mention differences.

NOW YOU TRY IT

- 2 Write two or more sentences to describe how retrievers and terriers are different.

Check your answer on page 110.

COMPREHENSION



KNOW THE SKILL: **FACT AND OPINION**

Facts are things that can be proven. Opinions are things that people think. They may be true or not true. It is important to know how to tell what is fact and what is opinion.

DURING THE TEST

Read all the answers before you choose one. The correct answer will be in the passage. Some of the options might be facts or opinions that are not in the passage. These are not correct. To be correct, the facts or opinions must be in the passage. While considering each answer, ask yourself if it might not be true. If it might not be true, then you know it is an opinion.

TEST EXAMPLE

- 1 Which sentence is an opinion?
- (A) There are more than 400 breeds of dogs.
 - (B) Dachshund means “badger dog” in German.
 - (C) Small dogs are good only for sitting on someone’s lap.
 - (D) The first tame dogs were hunters.

THINK ABOUT THE ANSWER

Option C is an opinion. It may be true, but it cannot be proven true. Options A, B, and D are facts from the passage that can be proven true.

NOW YOU TRY IT

- 2 All of the following statements are facts except
- (F) Dogs are related to foxes, wolves, and jackals.
 - (G) Good senses of hearing, sight, and smell were useful for early hunters.
 - (H) The word terrier comes from the French word for “the earth.”
 - (J) All of the statements are facts.

Check your answer on page 110.



Read the Directions Carefully

This is a no-brainer! Pay attention while you read the directions. It will help you avoid careless errors.