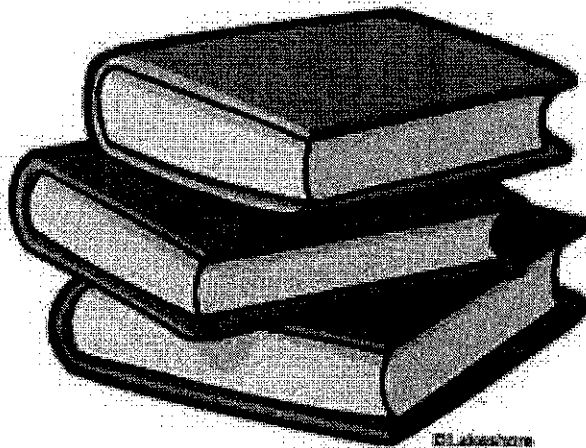




**National  
Literacy Test  
Year 8  
Practice Paper**



## Home Truths?

Well-meaning but misinformed people think animals in the wild are "happy" because they are "free". They imagine this wild animal roaming about the savannah on digestive walks after eating a prey that accepted its lot piously. They imagine this animal overseeing its offspring proudly and tenderly, the whole family watching the setting of the sun from the limbs of trees with sighs of pleasure. Then it is captured by wicked men and thrown into tiny jails. Its "happiness" is dashed. It yearns mightily for "freedom" and does all it can to escape. Being denied its "freedom" for too long, the animal becomes a shadow of itself, its spirit broken. So some people imagine.

That is not the way it is.

Animals are territorial. That is the key to their minds. Only a familiar territory will allow them to fulfil the two relentless imperatives of the wild: the avoidance of enemies and the getting of food and water. A biologically sound zoo enclosure – whether cage, pit, moated island, aviary or aquarium – is just another territory, peculiar only in its size and in its proximity to human territory. In a zoo, we do for animals what we have done for ourselves with houses: we bring together in a small space what in the wild is spread out. Now the river flows through taps at hand's reach and we can wash next to where we sleep, we can eat where we have cooked, and we can surround the whole with a protective wall and keep it clean and warm. A house is a compressed territory where our basic needs can be fulfilled close by and safely. A sound zoo enclosure is the equivalent for an animal. It finds within it all the places it needs – a lookout, a place for resting, for eating and drinking, for bathing, for grooming etc. – and finds that there is no need to go hunting, food appearing six days a week.

One might even argue that if an animal could choose with intelligence, it would opt for living in a zoo. Think about it yourself. Would you rather be put up at The Ritz\* with free room service and unlimited access to a doctor or be homeless without a soul to care for you?

\* a luxury hotel

1 Which of the following best describes this text?

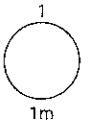
Tick **one**.

fictional narrative

factual information

opinion and argument

instructions and advice



2 What message is conveyed in this text?

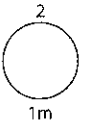
Tick **one**.

All animals need to be properly cared for.

Animals are more comfortable in the wild.

Zoos are best.

No-one really knows what is best for animals.



3 In the first paragraph, the narrator describes an imagined wild animal family. Where does the family relax?

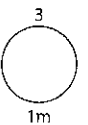
Tick **one**.

at the foot of a tree

on the branches of trees

on a rock in the sunset

in a shady haven



4 What is the narrator's view of life in a zoo?

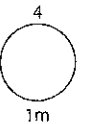
Tick **one**.

It is like being in a tiny jail.

Life is easier than in the wild.

Animals are happy to be close to humans.

Animals become dispirited.



5 ... animals in the wild are "happy" because they are "free".

What does the narrator think about people who believe this?

Tick **two**.

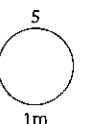
that they have a good understanding of animal welfare issues

that they have an idealised view of nature

that they can see both sides of the argument

that they realise the importance of exercise for wild animals

that they do not understand the difficulties animals face living in the wild



please turn over



6

Look at the text in the box below.

**Underline** the **phrase** that shows that some animals in the wild **expect** to be eaten by others.

They imagine this wild animal roaming about the savannah on digestive walks after eating a prey that accepted its lot piously. They imagine this animal overseeing its offspring proudly and tenderly, the whole family watching the setting of the sun from the limbs of trees with sighs of pleasure.

6  
1m

7

*That is not the way it is.*

What is the effect of this single sentence paragraph?

Tick **two**.

- |  |                          |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| It highlights that everything that went before it is not true.     | <input type="checkbox"/> | It has more impact because it stands on its own.         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| It is meant to separate the animal perspective from the human one. | <input type="checkbox"/> | It separates the text to show two sides of the argument. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| It shows that the narrator is feeling defensive.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | It is there to introduce the true facts.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7  
1m

8

What does the narrator say are the main challenges for animals living in the wild?

Tick **two**.

- |                                      |                          |                                  |                          |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| keeping control of their territory   | <input type="checkbox"/> | making sure they exercise enough | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| avoiding captivity                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | maintaining an adequate diet     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| protecting themselves from predators | <input type="checkbox"/> | living alongside humans          | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8  
1m

9

What does the narrator see as the advantages of living in a *compressed territory*?

Tick **two**.

- |                                    |                          |                                      |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| You can do whatever you want.      | <input type="checkbox"/> | It is safe.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Everything you need is convenient. | <input type="checkbox"/> | It has proper plumbing.              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| It is near to friendly neighbours. | <input type="checkbox"/> | There are so many places to explore. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9  
1m

10

Think about the narrator's viewpoint. Put ticks to show whether the narrator would **agree** or **disagree** with the following statements.

	The narrator would	
	agree	disagree
Animals need to have freedom to be happy.		
Life in the wild is not always easy.		
It is wrong to put animals in zoos.		
Animals have everything they need in zoos.		
Living in a zoo is like living in a top-quality hotel.		
Animals in the wild have no-one to look after them.		

10  
2m

11

... we do for animals what we have done for ourselves ...

What does this tell us about the narrator's assumptions?

Tick **two**.

- |  |                          |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| He thinks animals have the same values and needs as humans.            | <input type="checkbox"/> | He feels only humans know the correct way to live.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| He feels all living creatures deserve to have a roof over their heads. | <input type="checkbox"/> | He thinks zoos fulfil the same role for animals as houses do for humans. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| He thinks animals really want to live in the wild.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | He believes that humans are the masters of all animals.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11  
1m

12

Put ticks to show which of the following statements are **fact** and which are **opinion**.

	Fact	Opinion
Animals in the wild are happy.		
People who put animals in cages are wicked.		
Animals in zoos want to escape.		
Some people believe zoos are bad for animals.		
Life in a zoo is easier than in the wild.		
Animals in zoos do not need to go hunting for food.		

12  
2m

**End of test. Please check your work.**

TOTAL  
9m

