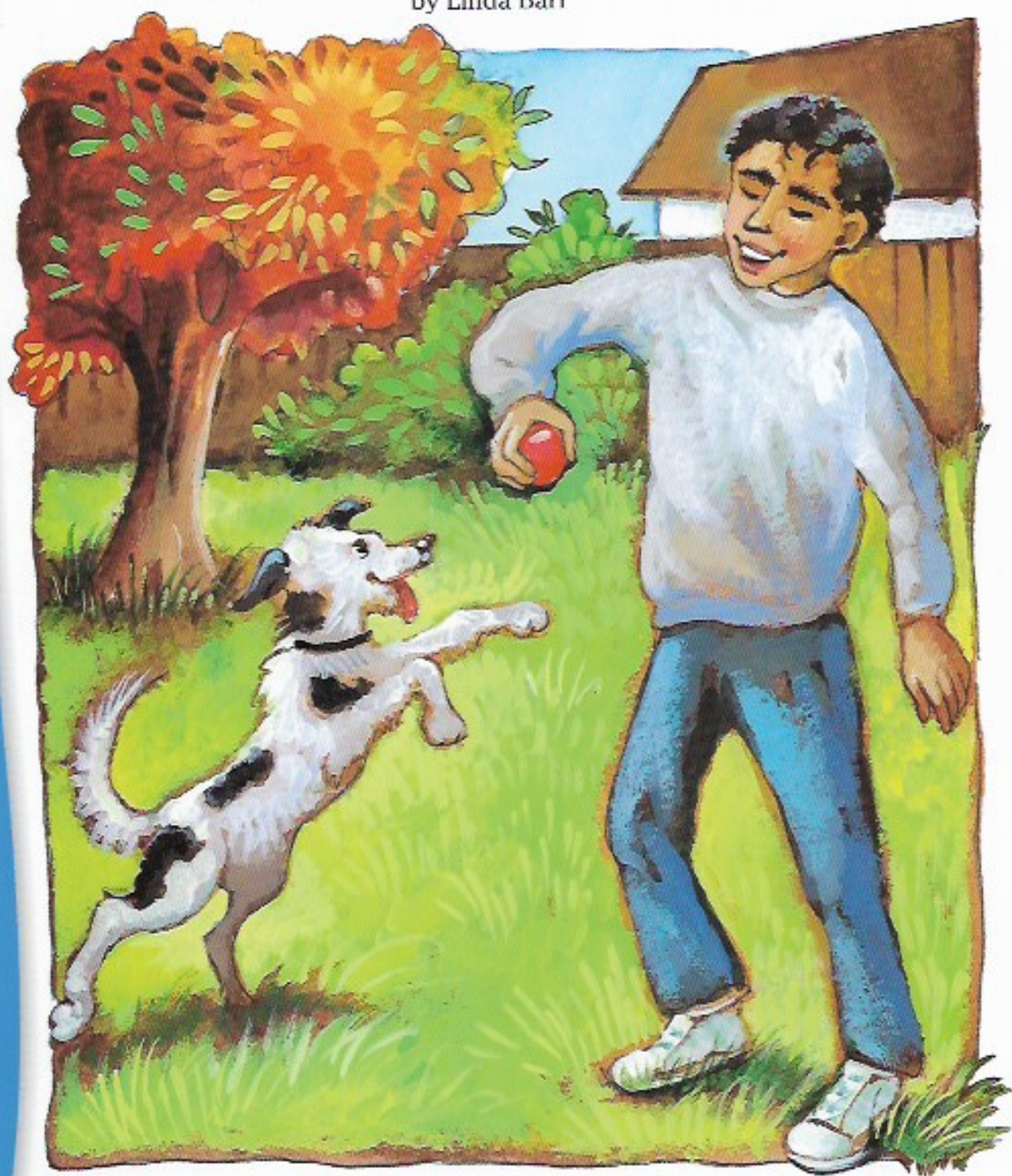


A Lesson Learned

by Linda Barr



1 “Where did you get that dog, Kei?”
Dad asked as he raked leaves in the yard. Leaning against Kei was a skinny white dog with black spots. His tail was wagging, and he seemed to be smiling. Kei was grinning too. “He’s great, isn’t he, Dad? I found him wandering around the park all by himself. I think he’s hungry! Could we keep him?”

2 “I’m sure he *is* hungry,” Kei’s father said. “I’ll also guess that he has fleas and who knows what else! Kei, you can’t keep him. Your mother and I are busy enough with you, your sister, our jobs, our house . . .”

3 “I’ll take care of him,” Kei promised. “You won’t have to do anything.”

4 His father sighed and said, “Remember your goldfish, the one that fell in the toilet when you finally changed its water?”

5 “That was a long time ago,” Kei pointed out. “I’m older now. I can handle the responsibility of taking care of a pet. I can even pay for Spot’s food. That’s the name I’d give him if he were mine—Spot. My friend Hank needs help delivering newspapers in our neighborhood after school. I can deliver part of his route and make enough money to buy dog food!”

6 Frowning, his father said, “Delivering papers is another big responsibility, Kei. You have to remember to do it every day. You have to deliver the paper on time. You need to make sure each paper goes to the right house.”

7 Kei insisted he would do a good job, so his dad said he would ask Kei’s mom about keeping the dog. Two days later, with Spot tagging along, Kei started his newspaper route.

8 A few weeks later, Kei was walking home from school with his neighbor, Inali. Inali asked Kei if he would like to come over and play a new video game. The idea tempted Kei, but he told Inali that he had to deliver newspapers.

9 “How about just one game?” Inali asked. “Most of the people in our neighborhood are at work. They won’t know whether you deliver their paper at 3:30 or at 4:00.”

10 “I guess one quick game won’t hurt,” Kei responded. He stopped at home to tell his sister where he was going. At Inali’s house, Kei lost track of the time. One quick game became two. The boys were starting the third game when Kei glanced at the clock. It was 4:30! His parents would be home soon, and he hadn’t even started his paper route!

11 Panicking, Kei begged Inali to help him deliver the papers. They each took one side of the street. Rushing from house to house, Kei watched for his parents. He didn’t know what they would do if they learned he delivered the papers late. They were counting on him to keep his word. Would they be angry? Would they take Spot to a shelter?

12 Kei was standing in his driveway when his parents pulled in and parked the car. His dad opened the car door, greeted Kei, and said, “Kei, I just want you to know that Mom and I are proud of you. You are showing us that you are responsible enough to take care of Spot. Keep up the good work!”

13 Kei smiled to himself as he heaved a sigh of relief. From now on he would deliver papers first and spend time with friends afterward.

COMPREHENSION

- At the beginning of the story, Kei's father
 - doesn't like dogs.
 - thinks Kei is not very responsible.
 - thinks the family has too many pets.
- Kei promises to
 - get a newspaper route.
 - take care of Spot.
 - clean his goldfish's water.
- Kei found Spot
 - on his way home from school.
 - while he was delivering newspapers.
 - wandering around at the park.
- Kei played video games
 - before he delivered his newspapers.
 - after his parents came home.
 - after he delivered his newspapers.
- Kei will use the money from his paper route to
 - pay Inali for helping him.
 - buy a video game like Inali's.
 - buy food for Spot.
- Kei wants to deliver the papers before his parents get home because
 - he is trying to prove he is responsible.
 - his parents like to read the paper when they get home.
 - then he will have time to play video games.
- At the end of the story, Kei learns
 - to take better care of Spot.
 - to make better decisions.
 - that he needs help delivering the papers.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

- A** Often you can tell the meaning of a word from other words and ideas in the story.

In each paragraph shown in parentheses, find the word that best matches the meaning below. Write the word.

- to bring or carry (5)
- path (5)
- invited; lured (8)
- feeling scared or alarmed (11)
- a place for stray animals (11)

- B** One good way to learn words is to use them.

Read each sentence. Look back at the paragraph, and find the word that best completes each sentence below. Write the word.

- The deer are ___ through the forest. (1)
- Mom ___ that I wear a coat in the cold weather. (7)
- She sighed as she ___ out the window. (10)



LEARN ABOUT WORDS (continued)

- 9 Manuel _____ a deep breath as he finally rounded the corner toward home. (13)
- 10 As she heard the news, Sara suddenly felt a sense of _____. (13)

WORD STUDY

C walk walks walked walking

A suffix is a word part that is added to the end of a root or a base word. A suffix often signifies the part of speech and sometimes adds meaning. You can add *-s*, *-ed*, or *-ing* to some base words.

joke jokes joked joking

If the base word ends with an *e*, drop the *e* before adding *-ed* or *-ing*.

Add the suffix to each base word. Write the new word.

- 11 jump + ing
12 talk + ed
13 vote + ed
14 pick + s
15 dare + ing
16 line + s
17 kick + ed
18 wear + ing

D Room is to house as branch is to (door, tree).

Run is to running as talk is to (talking, walking).

In the first example, the word that best completes the sentence is *tree* because a branch is part of a tree just as a room is part of a house. In the second example, the correct word is *talking* because *talk* is the base word for *talking*, just as *run* is the base word for *running*.

Write the word that best completes the sentence.

- 19 Tree is to lumber as wheat is to (flour, stalk).
20 Wash is to face as brush is to (teeth, comb).
21 Hand is to write as bell is to (school, ring).
22 Dark is to darker as light is to (sun, lighter).
23 Fly is to bird as swim is to (fish, water).
24 Easy is to simple as hard is to (rock, difficult).
25 Car is to garage as refrigerator is to (kitchen, cold).

The Desert River

by Maia Sheppard



- 1 A certain river in South Africa is unlike any other in the world, a river whose destiny was created by its unique surroundings. This river is an example of how adapting to a different environment can create extraordinary new life. As its waters flow through Angola, Namibia, and finally into Botswana, the Okavango River is not aware of its unlikely destination.
- 2 Rivers usually end their journeys by joining other bodies of water. For example, the mighty Mississippi flows into the Gulf of Mexico, the Nile empties into the Mediterranean Sea, and the Amazon pours into the Atlantic Ocean. The Okavango River is different. As it enters Botswana, what lies ahead is the Kalahari Desert, and that is where the Okavango creates an exquisite home. The Okavango River brings life to all it touches as it makes its long journey from the highlands of Angola to the world's largest stretch of continuous sand, the Kalahari Desert.
- 3 In the local Tswana language, *Kalahari* means "the big thirst," referring to a land of dust, sand dunes, searing heat, and little rain. Yet in a far corner of the Kalahari Desert lies the Okavango Delta, which is perhaps the largest inland delta in the world. It is also considered by many to be the most precious wetland in the world. A delta is an area at the mouth of a river that flows into a body of water or, in the case of the Okavango, a sandy desert. At this point the river spreads out and creates channels which, from above, look like the Greek letter Delta.
- 4 What makes the Okavango waters rush to this unlikely desert home? Like other rivers, the Okavango once flowed to the sea, but disruptions in its surroundings produced harsh conditions and charted a new course for the river. Following its new trajectory, the Okavango has given life to a variety of cultures and one of the world's most awe-inspiring ecosystems.

5 The source of the Okavango River is in the central highlands of Angola, where it is known as the Cubango River. When Earth was still young, the Okavango merged with the Orange River to its south and flowed into the Atlantic Ocean. Major shifts within Earth later caused the Okavango to merge with the Limpopo River to the east before reaching the Indian Ocean. Massive changes in Earth's crust again altered the flow of the Okavango to its current destination in Botswana. Its first destination in Botswana was Lake Makgadikgadi, but an extension of the great East African Rift system and the continued shrinking of Earth's crust, created a trough that disrupted the Okavango's flow. As sediment and windblown debris accumulated in the depression, the fan-shaped delta emerged and altered the water's course. Soon after that, Lake Makgadikgadi evaporated, and the Okavango flowed to its current home in the Kalahari sands.

6 In the Okavango Delta, we can witness the beauty that has resulted from the river's unique journey. As the Okavango enters Botswana, it falls over the Gomare Fault, an extension of the East African Rift. At this point the river becomes a delta, splits, flows into many channels, and creates countless islands, lagoons, and floodplains. The result is one of the world's most beautiful and unique ecosystems that provides homes for African fish eagles, kingfishers, hippopotami, crocodiles, and tiger fish. The channels are lined with papyrus plants, and floating on top of the water are lilies whose white and yellow flowers are often reflected in the still water. Dragonflies buzz just above the surface, birds sing in the shrubs along the shores, and the trees sway as the elephants search for food.

7 The heart of the delta is accessible by air only. The inner regions remain mainly uninhabitable by people because of annual floods, malaria, and the deadly tsetse fly. People live on the outskirts, however. They traverse through the channels on dugout canoes called *mekoros* and practice subsistence farming and fishing.

8 In Botswana, a primarily dry country, it is common to hear people saying "water is life." For the many communities located in and

around it, the delta is a vital source of water for cooking, bathing, and washing clothes. Cattle and other animals are led to the water's edge daily to quench their thirst. Small plots of land are planted on the fertile banks, where aquatic reeds are also collected to build homes. When the school bell signifies the last class of the day, children run from their sweltering classrooms to the refreshing cool waters. They head for the water not only to splash and swim, but also to fish for food for dinner.

9 Like so many other rivers, the Okavango gives sustenance to societies, animals, and vegetation. It is in the delta, where the river reaches the desert, that the uncommon life of the Okavango becomes unforgettable. The approximately eleven thousand square miles of channels, islands, and floodplains are constantly changing. At the top of the perennial delta, the water diverts into three predominate channels, which then feed the smaller network of waterways throughout the delta. Here even waterways have a life of their own. As the water enters the delta, it begins to deposit the 650,000 tons of sediment gathered along its journey. The sediment is comprised of sand, plant material, clay, and chemical compounds, which are carried at the river bottom in what is called the *bed load*.

10 The bed load plays a crucial role in the two hundred-year life cycle of the delta channels. As the water flows into the channels, it deposits sediment on the bottom until the buildup is so great that the water can no longer flow over it. The channel then dies and a new one is created as water starts on a fresh path, which usually follows a well-worn elephant trail where the vegetation has been stomped and resistance is less.

11 Water flows quickly through the three primary channels. Yet, as it diverts to the smaller channels and flows farther from the source, the volume of water lessens and the water becomes stagnant and swamplike. The swamps are crucial to the existence of the delta. One reason is that they provide ideal conditions for the growth of aquatic plants. Another reason is that the swamp waters seep into the islands, keeping land fertile for trees, shrubs, and grasses.

- 12 The extensive vegetation is not only picturesque, it is essential to the survival of the delta. Without the transpiration of plants, the extreme heat would cause the majority of the water to disappear through evaporation. Rapid evaporation would create an increase in the soil's saline level. The ground would become toxic to plant life.
- 13 We can see other examples of the constant changes in the seasonal alterations of the delta. As the dry season ends, floodwaters rush in and transform the browning grasslands into swamps covered again with lush, green vegetation. The delta is a natural water hole for many animals of the Kalahari. Zebras wade into the water to graze on the fresh aquatic plants, and hippos wallow all day in the cool water before feeding at night on fresh reeds. More birds gather. Some feed on the influx of insects. Others, such as the fish eagle, swoop down and snatch fish from their spawning grounds.
- 14 As the summer heat increases, the water begins to recede. Almost all the water that entered the delta during high-water season disappears as a result of the transpiration of plants or through evaporation. Fresh grasses grow in the place of swamps, and the delta shows yet another new face.
- 15 The untamed delta is still evolving. As the Kalahari sands increase and humans continue to develop the land, the delta struggles to exist. About 75 percent of the delta is part of the Moremi Game Reserve. It is set aside for wilderness or land developed for tourists. Yet the area survives, as it has throughout the ages, creating along the way a verdant, life-giving landscape that continues to amaze all who witness it.

COMPREHENSION

- The river becomes a delta when it
 - flows into the Indian Ocean.
 - reaches Lake Makgadikgadi.
 - flows over the Gomare Fault.
- The article provides no information about
 - when people came to live near the delta.
 - why people don't inhabit the inner regions of the delta.
 - what caused the Okavango to flow into the Kalahari.
- The elevation of the land between the river's source and the delta
 - remains level.
 - increases.
 - decreases.
- Swamps are crucial to the delta because they
 - provide drinking water for wildlife.
 - sustain extensive vegetation.
 - are the breeding grounds for fish.
- Lake Makgadikgadi dried up because
 - the course of the Okavango was altered.
 - of a drought.
 - of its lack of plant life.
- The Okavango delta is a popular tourist attraction because of
 - the abundance of water sports.
 - its proximity to a major amusement park.
 - the wildlife viewing.
- The plant life in the delta
 - does not change throughout the year.
 - grows only in the swamps.
 - is very diverse.
- If there were a drought in Angola, the water level in the delta would
 - remain the same.
 - increase.
 - decrease.
- The author believes that the Okavango delta
 - is doomed to be swallowed by the Kalahari.
 - will survive any force of nature.
 - will remain the same in the centuries to come.
- In the last paragraph, the author implies that human development is
 - a threat to the delta.
 - protecting the environment.
 - absent in the delta.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

A Often you can tell the meaning of a word from other words and ideas in the story.

In the paragraph, find the word that best matches the meaning below. Write the word.

- 1 beautiful; carefully selected (2)
- 2 course (4)
- 3 the minimum for survival (7)
- 4 nourishment; support for life (9)
- 5 present during all seasons (9)
- 6 changes to another course (9)
- 7 a mass arrival (13)
- 8 lush; green (15)

B A word may have more than one meaning. Its meaning depends on the way it is used.

Look back at the paragraph to see how the word in **bold type** is used. Decide which of the three meanings below matches best. Write *a*, *b*, or *c*.

- 9 **source** (5)
- a one who supplies information
 - b a point of origin
 - c primary reference book
- 10 **depression** (5)
- a a state of feeling sad
 - b a period of low economic activity
 - c a place where the center point is lower than the edges

WORD STUDY

C A good vocabulary offers a wide choice of words that can be used to describe things. The choice a speaker or writer makes between two words that have the same general meaning can create a more favorable or less favorable impression.

Example: He is a (stingy, thrifty) person.
Thrifty gives a more favorable impression than *stingy*.

In each of the following sentences select and write the word that gives the more favorable impression.

- 11 His behavior was (**unusual, outrageous**).
- 12 The man's (**cowardly, meek**) style was the reason he lost his job.
- 13 Kanya has a (**unique, strange**) writing style.
- 14 Our server was (**overly, extremely**) friendly.
- 15 It was a (**difficult, brutal**) final exam.
- 16 The (**constant, incessant**) flow of customers kept us busy on Friday night.
- 17 I was (**shocked, amazed**) by Ali's behavior.
- 18 I find his (**differing, abnormal**) opinion to be refreshing.

D Antonyms are words that are opposite or nearly opposite in meaning.

Find the word that is the antonym of the first word in each group. Write the word.

- 19 sweltering (**temperate, sultry, hot**)
- 20 vital (**necessary, crucial, superfluous**)
- 21 harsh (**pitiless, benevolent, severe**)
- 22 rapid (**quick, stagnant, expeditious**)
- 23 swoop (**rise, plunge, descent**)
- 24 extension (**annex, addition, abridgment**)
- 25 outskirts (**edge, margin, center**)

Winter Survivors

Shannon Lacy



1 Emperor penguins are the largest of all the penguins. The average emperor is about four feet tall and weighs about seventy pounds. Its size helps the emperor survive in its unique environment. The emperor is one of the few animals on Earth that can live in the icy winters on the continent of Antarctica. Antarctica is located south of the

equator in the Southern Hemisphere. Nearly all creatures, except the emperor, leave the area when winter arrives in March.

2 The emperor's body is equipped to withstand intense cold. Four layers of waterproof feathers help insulate the body. Its small head, bill, feet, and wings help conserve heat. The birds also have a thick

- insulating layer of fat under the skin. Combine that with a low level of activity in the winter, and the emperor can live well in the coldest weather.
- 3 For mobility, the emperors have strong claws that help them grip the ice. When climbing steep slopes, they can use their beaks as ice picks to stay balanced. The birds may appear clumsy on top of the ice, but in the water they exhibit great speed and agility. With paddlelike flippers and webbed feet, emperors can swim about fifteen miles per hour. This rate is about four times faster than the fastest human swimmer. The emperors can dive deeper than any other bird. To search for food, they can dive nine hundred feet and stay underwater for twenty minutes.
 - 4 Penguins are gregarious birds that like to live in colonies. Being social creatures, they survive in the frozen land by huddling together to keep warm. The birds clump together in huge, dense masses. They lean on each other for warmth. They also take turns moving to the inside of the huddle for warmth. After one warms itself in the center, it waddles to the edge of the mass. Then another penguin moves to the warm center. The huddling maneuver can cut the heat loss from the body by as much as fifty percent. Instinctively, emperors like to be in groups. They are the only species of penguin that is not territorial.
 - 5 The emperors have another unusual way of surviving the cold climate. They use their body heat. Their arteries and veins are close together, so their blood cools before it gets to their feet, wings, and bill. Then it warms up on the way back to the heart.
 - 6 To survive other dangers, the emperors have a special type of camouflage called countershading. Their chests are white, and their backs are dark. This coloration helps them hide from ocean predators like the killer whale or the leopard seal. When the emperors swim, their colors match the colors in nature. From above, their backs blend with the dark sea. From below, their light bellies blend with the filtered sunlight above.
 - 7 Unlike most birds, emperors breed during some of the worst winter conditions on Earth. In May, a female penguin lays a single large egg and then leaves the egg behind, but only for a while. She makes the long trek to open water for food. The egg then sits literally on the feet of the male emperor. To keep the egg off the snow, the father balances the egg on his feet and incubates it with his brood pouch. The pouch is a warm layer of feathered skin that hangs over the top of the egg to keep it warm. Believe it or not, the male stands in the same place for about sixty-five days. Fasting the whole time, he withstands icy temperatures, cruel winds, and blinding storms. It is said that the male can lose half its body weight during this time.
 - 8 After a few months the female returns from the sea with food, which she regurgitates to feed the newly hatched chick. By this time the father is ravenous and leaves to search the ocean for prey such as fish or squid. Now it's the mother's turn to care for the chick. She shelters the chick in her brood pouch for a couple of months. If a young chick or egg were to fall from the protective pouch, it could die in as little as two minutes from exposure to the freezing temperatures.
 - 9 The chicks hatch in December, which is opportune timing. At first, the male and female parents take turns traveling to the sea and returning with food for the chick. It takes so long to get back and forth from the sea that they cannot feed the chick very often. It's not surprising that the meals are huge. A chick might eat an amount of food that equals thirty percent of its body weight in one meal.
 - 10 As the temperatures rise, the ice begins to break and expose water that is closer to the nesting site. Sporting their first plumage, the chicks become more independent. They can flock to the water and fish for their own food.
 - 11 Emperor penguins are masters at surviving in the harsh Antarctic climate. The icy sea is their home. Their bodies are built to ward off intense cold and freezing winds. The friendly creatures work together to survive common hardships in a land of ice and snow.

COMPREHENSION

- Emperor penguins live
 - in the arctic.
 - in Antarctica.
 - north of the equator.
- Antarctica is located
 - in the Southern Hemisphere.
 - south of the equator.
 - Both **a** and **b**
- According to the article, the penguins have four layers of
 - fat.
 - waterproof feathers.
 - skin.
- According to the article, the female penguin lays an egg during which month?
 - March
 - April
 - May
- Who cares for the emperor penguin chicks?
 - Both parents
 - Mostly the mother
 - Mostly the father
- For about sixty-five days, the father keeps the egg
 - on his feet.
 - under his wing.
 - behind his back.
- During the incubation period, the father
 - eats as much as possible.
 - fasts.
 - dives for fish under the ice.
- Emperor penguins survive in the intense cold by
 - huddling in groups.
 - recycling their body heat.
 - Both **a** and **b**
- Another good title for this article would be
 - Creature Camouflage.
 - Masters of Survival.
 - How Animals Adapt at Night.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

A Often you can find out the meaning of a word from other words and ideas in the story.

In the paragraph, find the word that best matches the meaning below. Write the word.

- endure successfully (2)
- social (4)
- packed together (4)
- without exaggeration (7)
- extremely hungry (8)
- suitable; convenient (9)
- to try to prevent (11)

B A word may have more than one meaning. Its meaning depends on the way it is used.

Look back at the paragraph to see how the word in **bold type** is used. Decide which of the meanings below matches better. Write *a* or *b*.

- intense** (2)
 - extreme
 - involving strain
- keep** (4)
 - to conform to
 - to stay
- cut** (4)
 - reduce
 - separate into parts

WORD STUDY

- C** Specific words communicate more clearly than general or vague words. For example, *vegetation* includes all types of plants; *flower* includes all types of flowers; and *rose* gives a picture of a particular flower.

Write the word or phrase that is the most specific in each series.

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| 11 equipment | bulldozer | machinery |
| 12 tell | say | whisper |
| 13 cat | Siamese
cat | animal |
| 14 tangerine | color | orange |
| 15 building | skyscraper | Sears Tower |
| 16 range | mountain | Mount
Everest |
| 17 spruce | shrub | tree |
| 18 canine | mammal | dachshund |

- D** Some words sound the same but are usually spelled differently and have different meanings. These words are called *homophones*. The pairs of words below are homophones.

Choose the correct word to match the meaning of each sentence. Write the word. You may consult your dictionary.

- 19 The spokesperson (**led, lead**) the committee meeting.
- 20 The runner (**passed, past**) the finish line in record time.
- 21 The (**core, corps**) of the apple had a lot of seeds.
- 22 The town (**counsel, council**) is meeting to discuss that issue tonight.
- 23 The candy my mother gave me tasted (**sweet, suite**).
- 24 The cat's (**claws, clause**) were sharp.
- 25 The (**border, boarder**) who lived in my aunt's rental property was very neat.