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РАЗВИТИЕ НАВЫКОВ ЧТЕНИЯ ТЕКСТОВ НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

DEVELOPING READING SKILLS IN ENGLISH

Учебно-методическое пособие

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Пособие содержит оригинальные тексты, посвященные жизни млекопитающих и птиц. Все тексты сопровождаются предтекстовыми и послетекстовыми упражнениями и заданиями, способствующими усвоению специальной терминологии и развитию навыков ведения дискуссии по темам изученных текстов.

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ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

Учебно-методическое пособие предназначено для студентов I-II курсов очного и заочного отделений естественно-географического факультета и имеет целью научить студентов чтению научно-популярных текстов по специальности «Биология», осмысленному и самостоятельному анализу учебного материала.

Пособие предназначено для развития навыков устного общения на темы по специальности на английском языке, расширения кругозора, изучения новой терминологии и развития навыков дискуссии по изученным темам.

Пособие содержит оригинальные тексты из периодических изданий, посвященные жизни млекопитающих и птиц. Тексты сопровождаются предтекстовыми и послетекстовыми упражнениями, которые способствуют усвоению специальной терминологии и развитию разговорных навыков. Творческие задания открывают широкие возможности для анализа изучаемых материалов, их обсуждения и дискуссии по темам изученных текстов.

Пособие не только служит источником языкового материала, но и учит читателей работе с текстом; различным видам чтения (ознакомительному, аналитическому, поиску в тексте определенной информации), прогнозированию содержания текста и общению по заданной тематике.

PART I. MAMMALS

Text 1. Panda

▪ ***Before reading the text answer the question: What do you know about pandas?***

He's got chubby cheeks. He naps a lot. He eats with his hands. He lives with his mother. Not exactly the kind of character you'd

expect to find at the center of high finance, international diplomacy, fan frenzy, government scrutiny, and scientific fascination. But Tai Shan is a giant panda cub, and that makes him, well, not your average bear.

Born at 3:41 a.m. on Saturday, July 9, 2005, at the Smithsonian National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C., Tai Shan is the first offspring of Tian Tia and Mei Xiang, male and female giant pandas shipped from China to Washington in December 2000. There are only eight other pandas in the United States: two at Zoo Atlanta in Georgia, two at the Memphis Zoo in Tennessee, and four at southern California's San Diego Zoo, where Bai Yun has had three healthy cubs in the past seven years. Together these 11 animals represent an extraordinary investment of scientific resources – and cash.

Hosting giant pandas costs each zoo an average of 2.6 million dollars a year, and that's if no babies arrive. Add a cub, and the budget tops three million dollars. Add two cubs (nearly half of panda pregnancies produce twins), and the tab approaches four million dollars. «Nobody», says David Wildt, head of the National Zoo's reproductive sciences program, «would ever commit this kind of money to any other species».

What makes pandas so special? Could be sheer cuteness. Giant pandas possess the charisma that politicians and movie stars dream of – and people crave a glimpse. The National Zoo's Internet panda cams, which follow the daily activities of Tai Shan and his mom, draw an average of two million online visits a month. In the first three months that Tai Shan was on public display, visits to the zoo jumped by as much as 50 percent over prior years. Adoring fans pack the railing at the Giant Panda Habitat shoulder to shoulder. Fingers point, voices coo, faces crease in blissful grins. So many cameras click at once that you'd think you were on the red carpet on Oscar night.

Scarcity also boosts the bears' cachet. Giant pandas are excru-

ciatingly rare. Even other famously endangered mammals – tigers, gorillas, black rhinos, Asian elephants – outnumber them, both in the wild and in captivity. China's most recent national giant panda survey reported that 1,590 of the black-and-white bears survive in the rugged hills of Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu Provinces. Such a precise figure is questionable, especially for a hard-to-spot species that occupies isolated and often virtually impassable mountain forests. Wildlife biologists put the free-ranging population somewhere between 1,000 and 2,000 individuals. In captivity, there were only 188 pandas worldwide at the end of 2005: the 11 U.S. residents, a handful of others in Mexico, Japan, Thailand, Germany, and Austria, and all the rest in zoos and research centers in their native China.

At any zoo the arrival of newly loaned pandas or the birth of cubs brings surges in attendance. But crowds don't translate into profits. Even with aggressive «save the pandas» membership campaigns and gift shops hawking panda-themed mugs, T-shirts, puzzles, and plush toys, no zoo has collected enough additional revenue to offset panda costs – not by a long shot.

Why are pandas so expensive? Maybe they're just the tiniest bit spoiled. At U.S. zoos these high-profile animals get the best of everything: state-of-the-art habitats with 24-hour video monitoring, the services of devoted keepers and veterinarians, and abundant supplies of fresh bamboo to eat, supplemented with carrots, yams, and vitamin-and-mineral-packed biscuits cooked up especially for leaf-eaters. Keepers even add chunks of fruit to juice and water, then freeze the mix into big «fruitsicles» as treats for their charges. Under the serious-sounding heading of «enrichment items», keepers give pandas a constantly changing assortment of plastic tubs, burlap bags, balls, and other toys to crush, wrestle, toss, and roll. This caliber of care runs hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. Itemizing the rest of the bill gets a little more complicated. Giant pandas are protected by both the United Nations

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the U.S. Endangered Species Act. «CITES forbids exchanges of animals for 'primarily commercial purposes', «says Ken Stansell of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). «Our Endangered Species Act goes even further and says that if we're going to issue a permit for a zoo to import an endangered animal, that import has to actually enhance the survival of the species».

Panda loans haven't always worked that way. In the 1980s and early '90s, some short-term loans from China to U.S. zoos seemed to be more about China's rental fees and zoos' admissions income than conservation. Sexually mature animals were shipped to institutions that couldn't offer breeding opportunities. Some critics even accused the Chinese of capturing wild pandas just to build up their rental stock. The controversy pushed the Fish and Wildlife Service to declare a moratorium on panda loans of any kind until it worked out a new set of giant panda import regulations. «We had to step back», Stansell says, «and find a way to use our permit process as a conservation tool».

Vocabulary:

admission – доступ, вход, принятие
average – средний, обычный, нормальный
blissful – блаженный, счастливый
boot – помогать
breed – выводить, разводить, вскармливать, размножаться
burlap – пеньковая мешочная ткань
cachet – отличительный знак
captivity – плен, пленение
host – принимать гостей
impassable – непроходимый
loan – заем, что-то данное для временного пользования
membership – членство
moratorium – отсрочка по платежам
mug – кружка, кубок
offset – возмещать, компенсировать
offspring – 1) отпрыск, потомок; 2) продукт, результат
pack – заполнять, набивать,

charge – заряд
charisma – обаяние
chubby – полнощекий, круглолицый
chunk – толстый кусок, ломоть
commit – поручать, вверять
conservation – сохранение
controversy – дискуссия, полемика
coo – ворковать, говорить воркующим голосом
crave – страстно желать, просить, жаждать
cub – детеныш
cuteness – привлекательность
enhance – увеличивать, усиливать
excruciating – мучительный
fascination – очарование, прелесть
fee – гонорар, вознаграждение
franzy – безумие, неистовство
glimpse – мелькание, мимолетное впечатление
grin – оскал зубов
habitat – родина, место расположения, естественная среда
handful – горсть, пригоршня
hawking – торговать вразнос
переполнять
permit – разрешение
plush – плюшевый
railing – ограда, перила
rang – колебаться в известных пределах
rental – сумма арендной платы, рентный доход
resident – постоянный житель
rhinos – носорог
rugged – неровный, негладкий
scarcity – нехватка, редкость
scrutiny – внимательный осмотр, обследование
sheer – абсолютный, полнейший
spot – определить местонахождение
survey – обзор, обследование, отчет об обследовании
tab – счет, чек
toss – бросать, кидать
treat – удовольствие, угощение
tub – кадка, бадья
virtually – фактически, в сущности
yam – батат

Reading Comprehension Exercises

Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences from the text:

1) Male and … giant pandas were shipped from China to Washington in December 2000.

2) Together these 11 animals represent an extraordinary investment of scientific … – and ….

3) … giant pandas costs each zoo an average of 2.6 million dollars a year, and that's if no babies arrive. Add a cub, and the … tops three million dollars.

4) So many … click at once that you'd think you were on the red carpet on Oscar night.

5) China's most recent national giant panda … reported that 1,590 of the black-and-white bears survive in the rugged hills of Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu Provinces.

6) Wildlife biologists put the free-ranging population somewhere between 1,000 and 2,000….

7) At any zoo the … of newly loaned pandas or the birth of cubs brings surges in attendance.

8) At U.S. zoos these … animals get the best of everything: state-of-the-art habitats with 24-hour video …, the services of devoted keepers and veterinarians, and … supplies of fresh bamboo to eat, supplemented with carrots, yams, and vitamin-and-mineral-packed biscuits cooked up especially for ….

Exercise 2

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the name of the first offspring of Tian Tian and Mei Xiang, male and female giant pandas shipped from China to Washington in December 2000? 2. How many pandas are there in the United States? 3. How much does hosting giant pandas cost each zoo? 4. How much does hosting giant pandas with babies

cost? 5. What makes pandas so special? 6. What do giant pandas possess? 7. How do people behave when they go to the zoo? 8. Are giant pandas excruciatingly rare? 9. Do other mammals – tigers, gorillas, black rhinos, Asian elephants – outnumber them, both in the wild and in captivity? 10. What did China's most recent national giant panda survey report? 11. Why is such a precise figure questionable? 12. Where can pandas be found? 13. Wildlife biologists put the free-ranging population somewhere between 1,000 and 2,000 individuals, don't they? 14. How many pandas were there at the end of 2005? 15. What does the arrival of newly loaned pandas or the birth of cubs bring? 16. Do crowds translate into profits? 17. Has any zoo collected enough additional revenue to offset panda costs? 18. Why are pandas so expensive? 19. Do these high-profile animals get the best of everything at U.S. zoos? 20. What do they get? 21. What do keepers give? 22. How much does such care cost? 23. Are giant pandas protected by both the United Nations Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the U.S. Endangered Species Act? 24. What does CITES forbid? 25. What does Endangered Species Act say? 26. What did the Fish and Wildlife Service declare?

Exercise 3

Make up a dialogue based on the text «My visit to the research center» using the words and word combinations given below:

Opportunities, female giant pandas, virtually, admission, permit, accuse, fees, import, conservation, additional revenue, abundant, native, average, charges, forbid, commercial purposes, constantly, questionable, expensive, resources, display, species, scientific resources, mature animals, breeding opportunities, endangered animal, the survival of the species, daily activities.

Exercise 4

Translate the first two passages of the article into Russian.

Then do the reverse translation. Check with the original.

Exercise 5

Give the essential points of the text.

Exercise 6

Prepare a 5-7-minute talk on giant pandas.

Exercise 6

Say what you knew about the life of pandas at US zoos and what you know now.

Exercise 7

Think over the question: Some people think it is wrong to keep animals in zoos. Do you agree?

Exercise 8

Discuss the role of animals in people's lives.

Text 2. Panda

(Continuation)

▪ ***Before reading the text answer the question: Why do people like going to the zoo?***

In 1998 the FWS declared a bold new policy: If U.S. zoos wanted pandas, they would have to become partners with China in giant panda conservation. China needed the help. Its conservation agencies needed information – basic science about panda diseases, hormones, social skills. In China's zoos and breeding centers, caretakers needed training to help pandas having trouble with mating, to combat parasites and infections, to bring up babies, and to make sure pandas were getting optimal chow. China's cash-strapped central government needed money to help pay for expanding and improving its network of nature reserves, and for the enforcement essential to transforming a reserve from an outline on a map into a genuine haven for wildlife. Today, to qualify for a panda import permit, a U.S. zoo has to design a research program that benefits wild pandas, and it must also help China pay for its own panda projects. Starting in the late 1990s, U.S. zoos have committed research firepower and fund-raising clout to long-term scientific loans. China sends captive-bred giant pandas to the United States. Zoo staff here study the smallest details of their pandas' mating activity, food habits, exercise preferences, sleep rhythms, and other traits, and share results with their Chinese counterparts.

By David Wildt's latest count, workshops presented by U.S. and Chinese experts in China have trained nearly 1,300 of that country's conservation professionals. Another hundred-plus have spent time at American zoos, working side by side with U.S. counterparts, then going home to share their new knowledge and skills. Each zoo's average annual investment in panda science and educa-

tion programs: $614,000.

Every year each zoo also sends China a million dollars for the protection of pandas and their remaining habitat. China uses these funds, for instance, to install communications networks in reserves, create environmental education programs for schools near protected areas, analyze the impact of habitat fragmentation on genetic diversity, and develop plans to restore degraded bamboo forests.

There's plenty of bureaucracy involved. Funds for projects in nature reserves in Sichuan Province typically pass from the contributing zoo to the China Wildlife Conservation Association, to the central government's State Forestry Administration, to the Wildlife Division of the Sichuan Provincial Forestry Department, to the district government where the reserve is located, and only then to the reserve itself. But the support for neldwork is crucial, says Peking University researcher Wang Dajun. «Captive numbers are up, but pandas in the wild still face very serious problems», especially the loss of habitat.

«Getting as much information as we'd like to have on how the money is being spent has been challenging», David Wildt says. Zoos must account to the Fish and Wildlife Service for the impact of their funds, but China is a sovereign nation, and no donor organization is likely to have much luck ordering the Chinese to open their books to public scrutiny. The large sums of money zoos spend on their panda loan agreements «create some tension», Ken Stansell acknowledges. «But China's spending a lot of its own money too, and investing twice as much in conservation in the wild as it was a decade ago».

Loan agreements also provide that a surviving cub can ring up an additional $600,000 obligation for the breeding zoo. All in all, the financial burden is tremendous, Stansell says, leaving him still puzzled about «why a zoo would want to get into the panda business».

Don Lindburg, head of the San Diego Zoo's giant panda pro-

gram, has an answer. Hosting pandas isn't about boosting revenues, or institutional prestige, or visitor numbers, he says. «Our pandas are valuable because they create a reason for a relationship with China. They open doors and give us access to what's happening with pandas in the field».

Lindburg's mightiest ambassador has probably been Hua Mei, oldest daughter of San Diego panda matriarch, Bai Yun. Born in 1999, Hua Mei was the first surviving panda cub bred in the U.S. In 2004 she was recalled by China to her mother's birthplace – the giant panda research center in Sichuan Province's Wolong Nature Reserve – where she promptly got pregnant and delivered twins. Hua Mei produced a second pair of baby pandas in 2005. And she wasn't alone.

Last summer Wolong was at the center of an unprecedented captive-panda population explosion: 11 females there (including Hua Mei) gave birth to 16 cubs. More stunning than the number of births was the survival rate, even of the twins: 100 percent.

«Ten years ago the infant mortality rate for babies hand-reared in Wolong's nursery was 100 percent», Don Lindburg says. When a wild female panda gives birth to twins, she typically cares for one and abandons the other to die. For twins born in captivity, human caretakers would try to save the rejected newborn, but almost always failed. «Those cubs were getting a dog-milk formula», Lindburg says, until a San Diego Zoo nutritionist came up with a replacement formula that more closely mimics the high-fat milk nursing pandas get from their mothers.

Wolong staff also boosted their survival rate by «twin swapping», which alternates babies between mother's care and nursery tending. Even though pandas don't usually raise two offspring at once, new mothers seem willing to accept both cubs – with a little help from human nannies.

Conservation International biologist Lii Zhi says the popular notion that giant pandas are naturally poor breeders is just wrong.

Recent studies show that wild pandas reproduce about as robustly as North American brown bears: On average, a wild female will have a cub every other year for some 15 years, adding five to six new pandas to the population over her lifetime.

Years of frustrating captive-breeding failures turn out to be mostly the result of human mismanagement, zoo staff acknowledge – making 2005's successes even more gratifying. Two cubs born in the U.S. boosted the year's total count, as did a surviving baby in Japan, and cubs produced at breeding centers in China's Sichuan and Shaanxi Provinces.

All those cubs pushed the captive population closer to a magic number: 300. With that many pandas, says population biologist Jon Ballou, «we can have a self-sustaining captive population, and maintain 90 percent of known giant panda genetic variation for a century». A member of the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, Ballou compiles a list every year that rates the genetic desirability of potential matings between all the captive adult pandas in the world.

So cuddly, funny, rambunctious, adorable Tai Shan turns out to be more than just the fulfillment of the National Zoo's decades-long dream of raising a healthy giant panda cub, more than a crowd-pleasing, four-legged rock star in a black-and-white bear suit. He stands for the possibility of genuine international cooperation on behalf of endangered animals, for the powers of science to turn substantial, long-term funding into real progress. And like every one of the cubs that swelled the giant panda ranks last year, he moves his species one step closer to a self-sustaining captive population, and one step back from the brink of extinction. Pretty heady stuff for a one-year-old. Happy birthday, Tai Shan.

Vocabulary:

access – доступ, подход
account – отчитываться
alternate – сменять друг друга
ambassador – посол, посланец, вестник
bold – смелый
boost – повышать
challenge – вызывать, сомневаться
clout – лоскут, тряпка
combat – сражаться
compile – составлять, собирать
count – счет, подсчет
counterpart – двойник, что-л. дополняющее другое
crucial – решающий, критический
cuddle – свернуться калачиком
degraded – находящийся в состоянии упадка
enforcement – давление, принуждение
essential – существенный, необходимый
fragmentation – дробление, раздробление
frustrate – расстраивать, срывать
genuine – подлинный, настоящий
haven – убежище, приют
hormone – гормон
install – устраивать, помещать, устанавливать
mate – самка, самец, сочетаться браком
matriarchy – матриархат
mighty – мощный
mortality – смертность
nutritionist – диетолог
outline – набросок, схема, план
parasite – паразит
rambunctious – сердитый, раздражительный, непокорный
rank – ряд
sustain – поддерживать, подкреплять
rear – воспитывать, выводить
reserve – заповедник
revenue – годовой доход, доходные статьи
ring up – разбудить звонком
robust – крепкий, здоровый, сильный
sovereign – суверенный, державный, полновластный
strap – ремень
stunning – оглушительный, ошеломительный
substantial – существенный, важный
swap = swop – менять, обмениваться
swell – увеличивать
tend – заботиться, ухаживать
trait – характер, черта
workshop – мастерская, секция, семинар

Reading Comprehension Exercises

Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences from the text:

1) In 1998 the FWS declared a … new policy: If U.S. zoos wanted pandas, they would have to become partners with China in giant panda conservation.

2) China sends … giant pandas to the United States.

3) China uses these funds, for instance, to install communications networks in reserves, create … education programs for schools near protected areas, analyze the impact of habitat fragmentation on genetic diversity, and develop plans to … degraded bamboo forests.

4) «Captive numbers are up, but pandas in the wild still face very … problems», especially the … of habitat.

5) The large … of money zoos spend on their panda loan agreements «create some tension», Ken Stansell acknowledges.

6) «Those … were getting a dog-milk formula», Lindburg says, until a San Diego Zoo nutritionist came up with a replacement formula that more closely mimics the high-fat milk … pandas get from their mothers.

7) Even though pandas don't usually raise two …at once, new mothers seem willing to … both cubs – with a little help from human nannies.

Exercise 2

Answer the following questions:

1. In 1998 the FWS declared a bold new policy, didn’t it? 2. Why did caretakers need training in China's zoos and breeding centers? 3. China sends captive-bred giant pandas to the United States, doesn’t it? 4. Do Zoo staff study the smallest details of their pandas' mating activity, food habits, exercise preferences, sleep rhythms, and other traits, and share results with their Chi-

nese counterparts? 5. How many conservation professionals have been trained by workshops presented by U.S. and Chinese experts in China? 6. Each zoo's average annual investment in panda science and education programs is $614,000, isn't it? 7. Every year each zoo also sends China a million dollars for the protection of pandas, doesn't it? 8. Does China use these funds to install communications networks in reserves, create environmental education programs for schools near protected areas, analyze the impact of habitat fragmentation on genetic diversity, and develop plans to restore degraded bamboo forests? 9. Funds for projects in nature reserves in Sichuan Province typically pass from the contributing zoo to the China Wildlife Conservation Association, to the central government's State Forestry Administration, to the Wildlife Division of the Sichuan Provincial Forestry Department, to the district government where the reserve is located, and only then to the reserve itself, don't they? 10. Do pandas in the wild still face very serious problems? 11. Is China spending a lot of its own money too and investing twice as much in conservation in the wild as it was a decade ago? 12. Why is the financial burden tremendous? 13.Why are pandas valuable? 14. Who was the first surviving panda cub bred in the U.S.? 15. In 2004 she was recalled by China to her mother's birthplace – the giant panda research center in Sichuan Province's Wolong Nature Reserve, wasn't she? 16. Hua Mei produced a second pair of baby pandas in 2005, didn't she? 17. Why was Wolong at the center of an unprecedented captive-panda population explosion? 18. When a wild female panda gives birth to twins, she typically cares for one and abandons the other to die, doesn't she? 19. What happened with twins born in captivity? 20. What milk mimics the high-fat milk nursing pandas get from their mothers? 21. Why is Conservation International biologist Lii Zhi wrong? 22. What do recent studies show? 23. Cuddly, funny, rambunctious, adorable Tai Shan stands for the possibility of genuine international cooperation on behalf

of endangered animals, for the powers of science to turn substantial, long-term funding into real progress on tough conservation challenges, doesn't he? 24. Does he move his species one step closer to a self-sustaining captive population?

Exercise 3

Make up a dialogue based on the text using the words and word combinations given below:

Captive, average, variation, skills, privacy, breeding centers, nature reserves, adorable, fulfillment, substantial, long-term, decades-long dream, challenges, acknowledge, ambassador, agreement, central government, unprecedented captive-panda population explosion, spent time at American zoos, a self-sustaining captive population, the first surviving panda cub, remaining habitat, a decade ago, research center.

Exercise 4

Translate the first two passages of the article into Russian. Then do the reverse translation. Check with the original.

Exercise 5

Give the essential points of the text.

Exercise 6

Prepare a 5-7-minute talk on «Giant pandas in China».

Exercise 7

Think about the result of partnership between the USA and Chine in giant panda conservation.

Exercise 8

Discuss what you and your friends can do to protect nature.

Text 3. Meerkats

Before reading the text answer the question: Have you ever read information about meerkats?

Growing from pup to patriarch in the slanting, golden light of a Kalahari evening, Juma, a young male meerkat, stares across the sandy bed of the Nossob River: nothing but the shimmer of hot air and the evening chorus of barking geckos. Six pups, their eyes only recently open, nuzzle at his stomach, hoping to find milk. Juma has been watching over them since dawn, ignoring his own hunger as he scans the sky for eagles and the ridgeline for jackals, snakes, yellow mongooses, and even neighboring meerkats, which would kill the pups if they found their burrow unguarded.

In a large meerkat group, which can have as many as 40 members, six-month-old Juma would be too young to baby-sit. But there are only five adults in his small group, so he must take his turn guarding the pups. Of the ten meerkat groups that my research team – biologists from the University of Cambridge and the University of Pretoria as well as a few students – followed during five years in what is now called Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, we came to know Juma and his family best. We nicknamed them the Jackson Five, in honor of Tim Jackson, a resident biologist who discovered the group when it had only five members, and they quickly became accustomed to our presence, allowing us to follow them around their six-square-mile range.

This long-term study, from 1993 to 1998, grew out of my belief that meerkats might offer vital insights into the evolution of mammalian cooperation. According to evolutionary logic, an individual's success is usually measured by the number of offspring it raises, but some meerkats spend part or all of their lives helping others raise young rather than breeding themselves. Such seemingly altruistic behavior can be found in very few mammals, but even within this select group, which includes mole rats, marmo-

sets, wild dogs, and some other mongooses, meerkats are unique in the extent and coordination of their cooperative activities.

Meerkats' unusual system of rearing their young poses questions that go to the roots of our understanding of cooperative societies, including our own. Why do mature offspring remain in their parents' group instead of dispersing to breed? Why do they take risks and spend time and effort to help other members breed? How do group members divide their responsibilities and coordinate their contributions? And how do they ensure that all group members pull their weight?

Few of our closest relatives, the great apes, cooperate with each other as extensively as meerkats. Human cooperation probably has an ancient history, and by studying meerkats, which depend on their group for survival, we gain a window into the evolution of cooperative societies …

Our research on these issues progressed steadily until, two years into the study, disaster struck. The irregular rainfall of the Kalahari failed completely, and the remaining grasses in the park shriveled and died. Twisters cruised up and down the riverbed, and the springbok and wildebeests left to search for the last remnants of grass in the dunes. At first the meerkats hung on, digging for beetles and scorpions in the loose sand, but gradually their condition deteriorated and they were forced to forage farther and farther from bolt-holes – quick-escape burrows scattered throughout their range – and spend more and more of their time without the protection of sentinels.

Predators quickly took their toll: The Jacksons' dominant female was the first to be killed, followed rapidly by the dominant male and by Juma's older sister – all three probably taken by one of the martial eagles that rode the morning thermals over the riverbed.

Eventually Juma was left alone with three younger sisters. For the next year these four were inseparable, a cautious group whose

seamless alternation of sentinel duty ensured that no predators could get close to them. Other groups fared worse: Six of the ten groups that we had habituated were wiped out, leaving vacant ranges.

The rains returned the next spring, and the remaining groups started to breed – except for the Jacksons, all of whom were close relatives. At last, in midsummer, an unrelated male immigrated into the group, and, soon after, Juma left his sisters and his range for the first time in his life. We combed the riverbed, fearing he'd been killed, but found him two months later in a vacant range with two adult females and a related subadult male from a neighboring group.

Vocabulary:

alternation – чередование
altruistic – альтруистический
ape – обезьяна
bolt-holes – убежище
burrow – нора
chorus – хор
comb – прочесывать
cruise – совершать рейсы
crumb – крошки
disperse – рассеивать, исчезать
dune – дюна
fare – быть, поживать, питание
forage – добывать продовольствие
gait – походка
incentive – побуждение, стимул
jackal – шакал
marmoset – обезьянка, мартышка
martial – воинственный
mole – крот
mongoose – мангуста
nuzzle – нюхать, совать нос
partriarch – глава рода, старейшина
predator – хищник
prey – добыча
pup – щенок
range – ряд, цепь, ареал, область распространения животного
remnant – остаток пищи
ridge – гряда гор
sentinel – часовой, страж
shimmer – мерцание
shrivel – сморщиваться, ссыхаться
slanting – косой, наклонный
springbok – прыгун, газель
swagger – чванливая, самодовольная манера держаться
take toll – наносить тяжелый удар
tame – ручной
temporal – временный, височный
toll – дань
twister – ураган, торнадо
wildebeest – гну
wipe out – уничтожать

Reading Comprehension Exercises

Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences from the text:

1. He scans the sky for eagles….
2. But there are only five adults in his small group, so he must take his turn ….
3. We nicknamed them ….
4. They quickly became accustomed to ….
5. Meerkats come to accept them ….
6. This long-term study, from 1993 to 1998, grew out of my belief that ….
7. According to evolutionary logic ….
8. By studying meerkats, which depend on their group for survival, we gain a …
9. The irregular rainfall of the Kalahari failed completely, and the remaining grasses in the park ….
10. They were forced to ….
11. All three probably taken by one of the martial eagles ….
12. Six of the ten groups that we had habituated ….
13. The rains returned the next spring, and the remaining groups started to breed ….
14. We combed the riverbed, fearing ….

Exercise 2

Answer the following questions:

1. Who is Juma? 2. How old is it? What does Juma see? 3. How many members can a meerkat group have? 4. Why must he take his turn guarding the pups? 5. How did the scientists nickname meerkats? 6. Did they become accustomed to the presence of the scientists? 7. How long did the study last? 8. What are meerkats unique in? 9. What questions do scientists ask to cooperative societies? 10. How do the great apes cooperate? 11. Do meerkats depend on their group for survival? 12. Did research

progress steadily? 13. Why did grasses in the park shrivel and die? 14. Did meerkats dig for beetles and scorpions? 15. Who killed The Jacksons' dominant female? 16. Was Juma left alone with three younger sisters? 17. When did the rains return? 18. Whom did the scientists find Juma with? 19. Did the scientists fear that Juma was killed?

Exercise 3

Make up a dialogue based on the text using the words and word combinations given below:

Meerkats, eagles, mongooses, snakes, biologist, pups, measure, evolution, success, climb, nickname, variety, scales, insight, cooperative societies, belief, member, contribution, extent, steadily, completely, remaining, condition, dominant female, alternation, vacant ranges, adult females, breeding, disaster, inseparable, cautious, predator.

Exercise 4

Translate the first two passages of the article into Russian. Then do the reverse translation. Check with the original.

Exercise 5

Give the essential points of the text.

Exercise 6

Prepare a 5-7-minute talk on meerkats.

Exercise 7

Say what you knew about cooperative societies and what you know now. Think over the question: why did the scientists begin to study meerkats?

Exercise 8

Discuss the following topic with your friends: «Protection of wild animals».

Text 4. Meerkats

(Continuation)

Before reading the text answer the question: What do you know about meerkats?

Living in tents and caravans in our Nossob River campsite 30 miles north of Juma's range, my team and I monitored the lives of more than 200 meerkats during our five years in the park. Our immersion in the meerkats' world helped us unravel many mysteries about them, and, in turn, gave us clues to the behavior of other types of cooperative mammals. But we still struggled with one question: Why did subordinates go to such elaborate lengths to help raise others' young?

The answer, at least for meerkats, is interdependence. Everyone benefits from living in a larger group, and everyone suffers when group size falls. No one individual can afford to spend more than an hour or two on guard each day, so small groups spend part of their time without sentinels. The larger the group, the more individuals there are to feed the pups, who grow faster and are more likely to survive. (Even nonbreeding females will lactate at the same time as breeding females.) Bigger groups are also better able to repel neighbors' attempts to take over their ranges.

Juma certainly benefited from the large size of his group. His weight increased, and he fathered six litters. Then disaster struck again. His dominant female suddenly disappeared, probably killed by an eagle or a jackal, leaving him with four mature daughters – but no female to mate with. Another group with adult females lived just south of Juma's group, and a large group with several roving males lived to the north. Juma persistently tried to lead his group south to the females, but his daughters dragged their feet and headed north toward the males whenever they got the chance. Pulled by conflicting desires, the group moved up and down the riverbed.

By this time we had our own problems. We had been working

in the park for five years, and the authorities thought this should be long enough to complete the study. Eventually we were forced to pack up camp and leave …

And Juma? Last year my African colleague Justin O'Riain and I were allowed to spend a week in Kgalagadi to check on the survival of the individuals we had last followed in 1998. The population had not yet recovered from the drought of 1995, and many of the ranges were still empty. The Jacksons were no more – one of their main burrows had been taken over by a family of bat-eared foxes, and the other was clogged with loose sand. We searched for two days in the area where Juma and his family were last seen, scouring the sides of the riverbed with binoculars, but with no luck.

Finally, on our last evening in the park, we saw six meerkats standing near one of Juma's old burrows. We walked slowly over to them. Five stared, barked at us, and disappeared into the burrow. One male remained, rocking from side to side, seemingly unsure whether he should follow his companions or stay behind. We sat down ten feet away. He watched as we unpacked the scales, filled the weighing tray with sand, and topped it with hard-boiled egg, just as we had once done each day. He approached hesitantly, gaining confidence with each step. A dark mark below his right eye, which in the past had always distinguished Juma from the others, was still obvious. We had found him.

Juma carefully climbed onto the scale, and we weighed him. At 28 ounces he was lighter than he had been at his peak, but he was still the dominant male of his group. He and one other male were the only survivors of the animals that we had left in the park. He was eight years old, the oldest dominant male we have known, and unlikely to live much longer. But his group was one of the largest in the area and will probably maintain its range.

Vocabulary:

clog – мешать, препятство- loose – свободный

вать, засорять
drag – тащить, волочить, неохотно, лениво что-л. делать
elaborate – продуманный, сложный
gene – ген
immersion – погружение
interdependence – взаимная зависимость
propagate – распространять, передавать по наследству
pursue – преследовать
repel – отгонять, отражать
rove – скитаться, странствовать
shift – перемещать
unravel – разгадывать, объяснять

Reading Comprehension Exercises

Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences from the text:

1. Another group with … lived just south of Juma's group, and a large group with several roving males lived to the north.

2. Pulled by …, the group moved up and down the riverbed.

3. Biologists first … in the 1960s that individuals that do not themselves breed can propagate their genes by helping relatives breed.

4. But we still … with one question: Why did … go to such elaborate lengths to help raise others' young?

5. African colleague Justin O'Riain and I were allowed to spend a week in Kgalagadi to check on the … of the individuals we had last followed in 1998.

6. He watched as we unpacked the … , filled the weighing tray with sand, and topped it with hard-boiled egg, just as we had once done each day.

7. A dark mark below his right eye, which in the past had always … Juma from the others, was still obvious. We had found him.

Exercise 2

Answer the following questions:

1. How many meerkats did the scientists monitor during five years in the park? 2. What did they get to know? 3. What question

did they struggle with? 4. What do all group members willingly do? 5. Does everyone benefit from living in a larger group? 6. Do the pups in a large group grow faster? 7. What are bigger groups able to do? 8. Did Juma benefite from the large size of his group? 9. Did his weight increase? 10. Where did his dominant female suddenly disappear? 11. Whom was he left with? 12. Where did his daughters go? 13. Why did the group move up and down the riverbed? 14. Why were the scientists forced to pack up camp and leave? 15. Where were the scientists allowed to spend a week to check on the survival of the individuals they had last followed in 1998? 16. Did the population recover from the drought of 1995? 17. Were the ranges still empty? 18. Where did the Jacksons disappear? 19. Where did the scientists search them? 20. Whom did they see on their last evening in the park? 21. Did the meerkats bark at them and disappear? 22. Did one male remain? 23. Did he approach hesitantly, gaining confidence with each step? 24. Whom did the scientists find? 25. What did Juma do? 26. Was he still the dominant male of his group? 27. Was he the only survivor of the animals that they had left in the park? 28. How old was he? 29. Was his group one of the largest in the area?

Exercise 3

Make up a dialogue based on the text using the words and word combinations given below:

Mysteries, behavior, adult females, pursued, persistently, habituating, mature, observe, eagle, disappeared, luckily, colleague, recovered, drought, barked, hesitantly, weighing, distinguished, climbed, survivors, obvious, carefully, weighed.

Exercise 4

Translate the first two passages of the article into Russian. Then do the reverse translation. Check with the original.

Exercise 5

Give the essential points of the text.

Exercise 6

Prepare a 5-7-minute talk on meerkats.

Exercise 7

Say what you knew about cooperative societies and what you know now.

Exercise 8

Discuss the advantages of living in big groops.

PART II. BIRDS

Text 1. Birds of Paradise

▪ ***Before reading the text answer the question: Have you ever been to New Guinea?***

Here in the sweaty, vine-tied jungle of New Guinea is nature's most absurd theater, the mating game of the birds of paradise. No other birds on Earth go about the business of breeding quite like these. To dazzle choosy females, males strut in costumes worthy of the stage: cropped capes, shiny breast shields, head ribbons, bonnets, beards, neck wattles, and wiry feathers that curl like handlebar mustaches. Their vivid reds, yellows, and blues blaze against the relentless green of the rain forest. What makes for the sexiest mix of costume and choreography is a mystery, but it seems the more extreme the better.

Birds of paradise perch on an improbable branch of the avian family tree, the flashy cousins of straitlaced ravens and crows. They began splitting off from their bland kin millions of years ago, evolving into today's 38 eclectic species. Of these, 34 live only on New Guinea and its satellite islands.

Some of the first specimens to reach Europe, offered by New Guineans as gifts to Western kings, arrived in Spain in 1522 aboard one of Magellan's ships. It was rumored that these extraordinary birds came from the heavenly realms, where they soared

through paradise without wings and never touched the earth. The sight of the birds in the wild amazed early travelers: «My gun remained idle in my hand as I was too astonished to shoot», admitted naturalist Rene Lesson, who visited New Guinea in 1824 and brought back the first eyewitness account. «It was like a meteor whose body, cutting through the air, leaves a long trail of light». Their names bespeak the wonder they inspired: superb bird, magnificent bird, splendid bird, emperor bird.

For decades Europe's appetite for their plumes fueled hunting and vigorous commerce. At the trade's peak in the early 1900s, some 80,000 skins a year were exported from New Guinea for ladies' hats. Birding groups in England and the United States raised the alarm, and the slaughter abated as a conservation ethic grew. In 1908 the British outlawed commercial hunting in parts of New Guine under their rule, and the Dutch followed suit in 1931. Today no birds of paradise leave the island legally except for scientific use.

Vocabulary:

abate – ослаблять, уменьшать
absurd – нелепый, смешной
beard – борода
bland – мягкий, слабый
blaze – сиять, сверкать
bonnet – дамская шляпа, капор
breast – грудь
cape – щит, защита
choosy – привередливый, разборчивый
crow – ворона
dazzle – поражать, прельщать
eclectic – эклектический
ethic – нравственный, этический
flashy – сверкающий
raven – ворон
realm – царство, область, сфера
relentless – неослабевающий
ribbon – лента
satellite – спутник
slaughter – резня, массовое убийство
specimen – экземпляр
split off – откалывать, отделять
straitlaced – строгий, пуританский, нетерпимый в вопросах нравственности
strut – ходить с важным, напыщенным видом
suit – прошение, ходатайство о

improbable – невероятный, неправдоподобный
kin – род, семья
moustache – усы
perch – усесться, взгромоздиться plumage – оперение, перья
помиловании
trail – след, хвост
wattle – сережка (у птиц)
wiry – похожий на проволоку, гибкий, крепкий

Reading Comprehension Exercises

Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences from the text:

1. Today no birds of paradise leave the island legally except ….
2. The sight of the birds in the wild ….

Exercise 2

Answer the following questions:

1. Where does the action take place? 2. Do males strut in costumes worthy of the stage? 3. Does it seem the more extreme the better? 4. When did they begin splitting off from their bland kin? 5. 34 eclectic species live only on New Guinea and its satellite islands, don't they? 6. When did some of the first specimens arrive in Spain? 7. What was rumored? 8. Did the sight of the birds in the wild amaze early travelers? 9. What did naturalist Rene Lesson write? 10. Do their names bespeak the wonder they inspired? 11. What was exported from New Guinea for ladies' hats? 12. Did birding groups in England and the United States raise the alarm? 13. What did the British outlaw? 14. When did the British outlaw commercial hunting in parts of New Guine? 15. Do birds of paradise leave the island legally?

Exercise 3

Make up a dialogue based on the text using the words and word combinations given below:

Jungle, appetite, decade, scientific, myth, highland, vivid, price, New Guinea, local people, magnificent, vigorous commerce, superb, paradise, female, aboard, birds of paradise, arrived

in Spain, I was too astonished to, superb bird, magnificent bird, splendid bird, emperor bird, people of New Guinea.

Exercise 4

Translate the first two passages of the article into Russian. Then do the reverse translation. Check with the original.

Exercise 5

Give the essential points of the text.

Exercise 6

Prepare a 5-7- minute talk on birds of paradise.

Exercise 7

Say what you knew about birds of paradise and what you know now.

Exercise 8

Discuss what we can do to improve ecological situation.

Text 2. Birds of Paradise

(Continuation)

Before reading the text answer the questions: Would you like to visit New Guinea? Why?

With their glam attire and sexual theatrics, birds of paradise also embody a biological mystery: Why would evolution, with its pitiless accounting of cost and benefit, tolerate such ostentation, much less give rise to it? After all, exhibitionism is expensive, in biological terms, and a red flag to predators.

Fruit and insects abound all year in the forests of New Guinea, the largest tropical island in the world, and natural threats are few. Linked to Australia until about 8,000 years ago, the 1,500-mile-long island shared much of its neighbor's fauna. Marsupials and birds were plentiful, but placental mammals were entirely absent, meaning no monkeys and squirrels to compete with birds for food,

and no cats to prey on them. The result: an avian paradise that today is home to more than 700 species of birds.

Freed of other pressures, birds of paradise began to specialize for sexual competition. Traits that made one bird more attractive than another were passed on and enhanced over time. The usual rules of survival aren't as important here as the rules of successful mating.

«The diversity of New Guinea's birdlife also springs from its wealth of habitats, from humid coastal savannas to high-elevation cloud forests. Tangled swamps checker the lowlands, while a spine of rugged mountains, some rising 16,000 feet, creates a labyrinth of scarp and crag in the remote interior. Shaped by volcanoes, earthquakes, and equatorial rains, the landscape is rife with physical barriers that isolate wildlife populations, allowing them to diverge into new species. (The fractured landscape is also reflected in the diversity of indigenous cultures; more than 750 languages are spoken just in Papua New Guinea, the eastern half of the island.)

Farther east, in Papua New Guinea's Crater Mountain reserve, the forest grows dense to the mountain's summit, forming a canopy that blocks all but the thinnest rays of sun. Birdsong rings out in the gloom, a hoot here, a trill there, a melodious whistle, a harmonic tone as when a finger circles the rim of a glass. Drenched by nearly 300 inches of rain a year, this highland terrain is forever dripping. The forest floor, composed of layer on layer of organic material, is a wet sponge underfoot. And always, from somewhere below, comes the muted rush of a cold river spiriting away last night's rain.

Trails are rutted and mud-slick, swallowing boots and bruising the ankles of a first-time visitor. But the local women and children, who for a few kina will carry heavy gear and even lead you by the hand, tread lightly on bare feet. Pull out pictures of what you're looking for, and the men will lead you on long, clambering

hikes, their machetes swinging to clear a path to where the birds of paradise hold court.

Even with local guides, finding the elusive birds can be daunting. Their calls (squawks, mews, and nasal bursts), unique to each species, tantalize you. A ghostly aria. A glimpse of a forest dance floor reveals a weird, obsessive performance.

The people of New Guinea have been watching these displays for centuries. «Locals will tell you they went into the forest and copied their rituals from the birds», says Gillison. At highland sing-sings, now more tourist entertainment than true ritual, the painted and mud-daubed dancers still evoke the birds with their movements and lavish costumes. «By wearing the feathers, you get back the part of yourself that living takes away», Gillison says. «You capture the animal's life force. It makes you a warrior».

Ceremonial feathers are passed down from generation to generation. And although local people are still permitted to hunt birds of paradise for traditional uses, hunters usually target older males with full plumage, leaving younger males to continue breeding.

More serious threats loom. Though wholesale massacre of birds for the plume trade is long stanched, a black market still thrives. Vast palm oil plantations are swallowing up thousands of acres of bird of paradise habitat, as is large-scale industrial logging. Oil prospecting and mining are encroaching on New Guinea's wildest forests. Meanwhile, human populations continue to grow. Land ownership is fragmented among local clans, and their leaders disagree about which lands should be protected.

Meanwhile, in the dim light of the rain forest, a male bird of paradise again struts before an audience of coy females. For millions of years these exceptional birds have danced to perpetuate their kind. They'll keep dancing for as long as the forest offers them a stage.

Vocabulary:

placenta – плацента
reveal – обнаруживать
rim – ободок
rut – оставлять колеи
savanna – саванна
scarp – крутой откос
slick – гладкий, скользкий
spine – гребень горы
spirite away – тайно похищать
sponge – губка
springy – упругий эластичный, пружинистый
squawk – пронзительный крик
summit – вершина, верх
swamp – болото
tangle – сплетение, запутывать
tantalize – подвергать танталовым мукам, дразнить ложными надеждами
terrain – местность, территория
theatrics – сценическое искусство
tolerate – допускать, позволять
tread – ступать, шагать
trill – трель
weird – таинственный
ankle – лодыжка
attire – наряд, платье, украcanopy – балдахин, полог
checker – разнообразить, пестрить
clamber – карабкаться
crag – скала, утес
daunt – устрашать, запугивать
diverge-отходить от нормы
drag – торможение, задержка движения
drench – смачивать, мочить
dripping – мокрый, промокший
elevation – поднятие, высота
elusive – неуловимый
enhance – увеличивать, усиливать
exhibitionism – склонность к саморекламе
fracture – трещина, излом
gear – прибор
glamor – чары, волшебство
gloom – мрак, темнота
hike – путешествие пешком
hoot – крики, гиканье
marsupial – сумчатое животное
mew – мяуканье
mute – безмолвный
nasal – носовой
obsession – одержимость, навязчивая идея

шение
brow – выражение лица, вид, наружность
bruis – синяк
burst – взрыв
ostentation – показное проявление, хвастовство

Reading Comprehension Exercises

Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences from the text:

1) Freed of other pressures, birds of paradise began to ….
2) «The diversity of New Guinea's birdlife also springs from …
3) The fractured landscape is also reflected in the diversity of …
4) The people of New Guinea have been watching these displays for centuries. «Locals will tell you they went into the forest and …

Exercise 2

Answer the following questions:

1. Why do birds of paradise embody a biological mystery? 2. Why is life here pretty comfortable for birds of paradise? 3. Fruit and insects abound all year in the forests of New Guinea, don't they? 4. Are natural threats few? 5. Why is an paradise today home to more than 700 species of birds? 6. Are usual rules of survival more important here as the rules of successful mating? 7. Why did birds of paradise begin to specialize for sexual competition? 8. What does the diversity of New Guinea's birdlife spring from? 9. What isolate wildlife populations? 10. Does much of New Guinea remain wild as ever? 11. How does birdsong ring out? 12. Does a black market still thrive? 13. Why is it important to encourage protection of the birds' habitat?

Exercise 3

Make up a dialogue based on the text using the words and

word combinations given below:

Local guides, diversity, expensive, evolution, obsessive, glimpse, display, reveal, material, earthquakes, previously, mountain, plentiful, whistle, tourist entertainment, warrior, costume, hunter, movement, disagree, encourage, protection, human populations, a melodious whistle, fruit and insects, rules of survival, neighbor's fauna, no monkeys and squirrels to compete with birds for food, reflected in the diversity, obsessive performance, was previously known, wildlife populations, birds' habitat, for millions of years, local clans, rituals from the birds.

Exercise 4

Translate the first two passages of the article into Russian. Then do the reverse translation. Check with the original.

Exercise 5

Give the essential points of the text.

Exercise 6

Prepare a 5-7-minute talk on the island's unique environment.

Exercise 7

Say what you knew about birds of paradise and what you know now. Think what allowed birds to diverge into new species without difficulties.

Exercise 8

Discuss how the disappearance of forests influences animals and birds.

Text 3. Pelicans

Before reading the text answer the question: Have you read any information about pelicans?

An adult feeds a three-week-old chick regurgitated fish, cray-

fish, and salamander larvae at Montana's Medicine Lake (opposite). Some 4,000 breeding pairs come here each April. West Nile virus came too in 2003, killing about a thousand chicks. Fewer have died in the years since – not enough to threaten the overall population of more than 100,000. During mating season, both males and females grow a knob on the bill. Why should we pity the poor young pelican? The Ugly Duckling, after all, grew. up to be a beautiful swan, while the baby pelican – surely among the most homeliest creatures on Earth – can look forward only to becoming ... an adult pelican. Whether this constitutes much of an improvement is debatable.

Consider some of the words used by writers from Audubon onward to describe the American white pelican: clumsy, awkward, ungainly, grotesque, and absurdly ridiculous. Even the authoritative and no-nonsense new series The Birds of North America temporarily abandons scientific detachment to call the pelican somewhat comic, as if it were a feathered basset hound. All right, then: The pelican is no swan, all sensuous curves and stateliness. It's chunky. It's jowly. It has clown feet and a bill like a shovel, and it expresses sexual ardor by turning red in the face and growing a giant wart on its nose. So what are we to make of the fact that those same writers reverse themselves, often in the very same paragraph, to call the white pelican majestic, magnificent, graceful, and truly beautiful? Here's the reason: Our clumsy bird stood up, waddled forward, spread its wings, and took off. And voila – caterpillar to butterfly in ten seconds. But it's in the air that pelicans are truly transformed.

Vocabulary:

reverse – менять, изменять
sensuous – эстетический
shovel – совок, лопата
stately – величавый
basses – такса
bill – клюв
caterpillar – гусеница
chick – цыпленок, птенец

temporary – временный
ungainly – неуклюжий
waddle – ходить вперевалку
wart – бородавка, нарост
abandon – отказываться от
chuncky – коренастый
clumsy – неуклюжий
curve – изгиб
detachment – беспристрастность
knob – шишка, выпуклость

Reading Comprehension Exercises

Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences from the text:

1. West Nile … came too in 2003, killing about a thousand chicks.
2. …, both males and females grow a knob on the bill.
3. All right, then: The pelican is no swan …

Exercise 2

Answer the following questions:

1. Why should we pity the poor young pelican? 2. Can young pelican look forward to becoming a beautiful swan? 3. How can you describe the American white pelican? 4. Can we call to the pelican comic? 5. How do pelicans look like? 6. Why do some writers call the white pelican majestic, magnificent, graceful, and truly beautiful? 7. Where are pelicans truly transformed?

Exercise 3

Make up a dialogue based on the text using the words and word combinations given below:

1) clumsy, awkward, ungainly, grotesque, ridiculous, authoritative, temporary, species,
2) white pelican colonies, studies showed that, considered them competitors.

Exercise 4

Translate the first two passages of the article into Russian.

Then do the reverse translation. Check with the original.

Exercise 5

Give the essential points of the text.

Exercise 6

Prepare a 5-7-minute talk on pelicans.

Exercise 7

Say what you knew about pelicans and what you know now.

Exercise 8

Discuss the following topic with your friend: «Pollution of the environment kills the animal world».

Text 4. Pelicans

(Continuation)

Before reading the text answer the question: How can we protect environment?

Nearly all American white pelicans migrate between nesting areas in the Great Plains and Great Basin and wintering grounds on the Gulf Coast, in California, and in Mexico. (A small number of nonmigratory birds nest in Texas and Mexico.) In the continent's midsection, pelicans flock together and follow the big rivers – the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Arkansas, the Red – on their journeys. For an Oklahoma rancher or an office worker in downtown Kansas City, the sudden materialization of 200 or more huge white birds circling overhead can be almost shocking.

Many white pelicans spend winters in the company of brown pelicans, their saltwater cousins. In coastal areas, a watcher from shore can compare the two species' feeding styles. The brown folds its wings in flight and plunges into the water at speeds up to 40 miles an hour. White pelicans feed while afloat, large flocks

often fishing cooperatively in the ornithological version of Olympics-style synchronized swimming. Birds herd schools of small fish into coves or form a circle that gradually tightens like a seine net. Then the pelicans dip their massively pouched bills into the water, scooping up prey in a frenzy of thrusting, paddling, and splashing. A pelican with a mouthful of minnows crooks its neck to let water drain from its pouch before swallowing – which is why it doesn't matter that, in the words of Dixon Mer-ritt's famous limerick, «his bill will hold more than his belican».

West Nile virus, to which chicks seem especially vulnerable, has caused partial nesting failures in several white pelican colonies. At Chase Lake National Wildlife Refuge in North Dakota, home until recently to the largest colony in the United States, adult birds in 2004 abandoned eggs and newly hatched young for reasons still unknown. In 2005, something – perhaps prolonged cold, wet weather – caused mass mortality of young still in the nest.

Two seasons that could have produced 15,000 or more pelicans on the refuge may have seen only a few hundred successfully fledge.

The problems may be only temporary, though, barely significant for a species that lives about 20 years. The genus Pelecanus, which encompasses all eight of the world's pelican species (or seven, if a certain Peruvian pelican is only a subspecies), has existed in more or less its present form for around 20 million years – far longer than the time since the first protohumans reared up on their hind legs to scan the African savanna. While to our anthropomorphic eye the pelican seems both goofy clown and graceful flier, the truth is that it's simply going about its business the way it always has, fitting precisely into its unique ecological niche.

The pelican inspires laughter and wonder, and, maybe even more, a kind of affectionate empathy: After all, who among us hasn't at times felt awkward and unlovely, and yet imagined that –

given room to stretch our wings – we just might be beautiful?

Vocabulary:

cove – бухточка, убежище
disrupt – разрушать
fishery – рыболовство, рыбный промысел
fledge – оперяться, выкармливать птенцов
frenzy – безумие, неистовство
hatch – вылупляться из яйца
hind – задний
limerick – шуточное стихотворение
paddle – шлепать по воде, плескаться
rear up – поднимать, становиться на дыбы
refuge – убежище
scoop – черпать
seine – рыболовная сеть, невод
setback – неудача
thrust – совать, засовывать
vulnerable – уязвимый

Reading Comprehension Exercises

Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences from the text:

1. White pelicans … while afloat, large flocks often fishing cooperatively in the ornithological version of … synchronized swimming.
2. The genus *Pelecanus,* which encompasses all eight of the world's pelican… (or seven, if a certain Peruvian pelican is only a subspecies), … in more or less its present form for around 20 million years – far longer than the time since the first protohumans reared up on their hind legs to scan the African ….
3. Many white pelicans spend winters in the company of brown pelicans, their saltwater cousins.
4. The pelican … laughter and wonder, and, maybe even more, a kind of … empathy: After all, who among us hasn't at times felt … and unlovely, and yet imagined that – given room to stretch our wings – we just might be …?

Exercise 2

Answer the following questions:

1. Where do nearly all American white pelicans migrate? 2. Where does a small number of nonmigratory birds nest? 3. Do pelicans flock together? 4. What rivers do they follow on their journeys? 5. What company do many white pelicans spend winters in? 6. In coastal areas, a watcher from shore can compare the two species' feeding styles, can't he? 7. Does the brown fold its wings in flight and plunge into the water at speeds up to 40 miles an hour? 8. Do white pelicans feed while afloat? 9. White pelicans form a circle that gradually tightens like a seine net, don't they? 10. Do pelicans dip their massively pouched bills into the water, scooping up prey in a frenzy of thrusting, paddling, and splashing? 11. What caused partial nesting failures in several white pelican colonies? 12. What caused mass mortality of young still in the nest in 2005? 13. How long has the genus Pelecanus existed? 14. What feelings do the pelican inspire?

Exercise 3

Make up a dialogue based on the text using the words and word combinations given below.

Exercise 4

Translate the first two passages of the article into Russian. Then do the reverse translation. Check with the original.

Exercise 5

Give the essential points of the text.

Exercise 6

Prepare a 5-7-minute talk on pelicans.

Exercise 7

Say what you knew about pelicans and what you know now.

Exercise 8

Discuss what nature gives people. Think about the most serious environmental problems and discuss how people can solve them.

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