

WHY DO ELEPHANTS LOOK LIKE ELEPHANTS?

If you've ever seen an elephant on TV or at the zoo, you might have wondered why these giant grey animals look the way they do.

Elephants are unique and amazing creatures. They are the largest land animals on Earth. They are also thought to be the most intelligent mammals in the world after the great apes (a group of animals which includes humans, gorillas and chimpanzees).

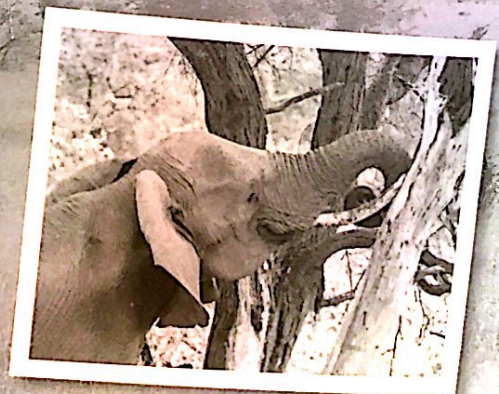
Elephants have special features that help them to survive — just like all other animals. For example, giraffes have long necks so that they can reach food at the tops of trees. Polar bears are furry to keep them warm in freezing temperatures. Owls are often brown or grey to help them blend in with the trees around them. These special features are called adaptations.

So why do elephants look like elephants? With their sharp tusks, long trunks and flappy ears, you might think elephants look a little bit unusual, but each of these features has a very special use.

TUSKS

Elephants use their tusks as handy tools. Tusks help them to strip the bark off trees for food and to dig in the ground to look for water. They also use their tusks to fight off other elephants when necessary.

An elephant's tusks are actually enormous teeth. They can grow to be over six feet long — that's bigger than the height of an average adult man! Tusks are an elephant's incisor teeth. Humans have incisors too — they are the teeth at the front of our mouths that we use to bite through food and cut it into small pieces.

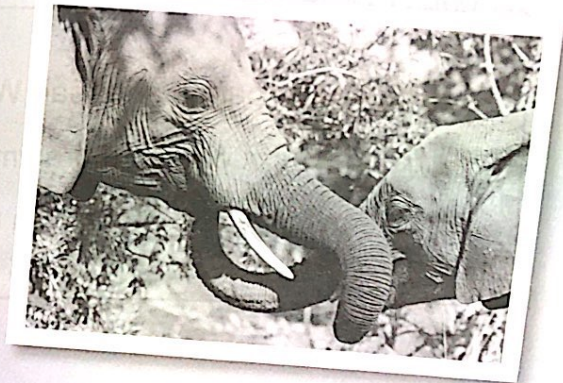
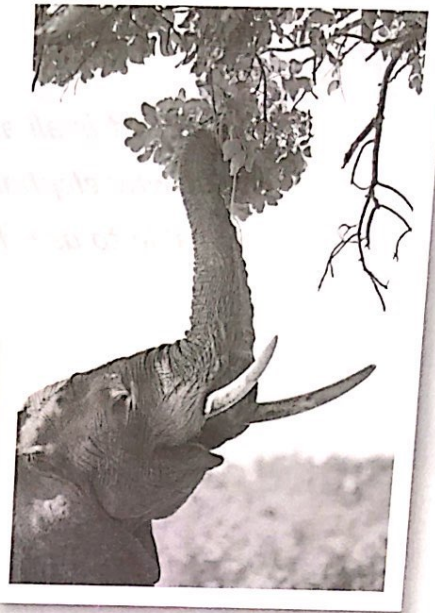


TRUNK

An elephant's trunk is a very useful thing. Firstly, it's a nose. Elephants can use their trunks to smell something that is almost 20 kilometres away. It could take you about 4 hours of non-stop walking to travel 20 kilometres, so that's a pretty long way.

A trunk is more than just a nose, though. Elephants use their trunks like we use our hands. Trunks are very useful for reaching for things, picking things up, carrying things and throwing things.

Many scientists believe that elephants use their trunks to comfort other elephants that are upset or scared. Of course, it's impossible to know what animals are really thinking, but it seems like elephants use their trunks in the same way that we might use our arms to hug a family member who is feeling down.



EARS

Elephants live in parts of Africa and Southeast Asia where the weather can get very warm. Their ears help them to keep cool, though. An elephant's ears are quite thin and are full of lots of little blood vessels. When they get too warm, elephants flap their ears back and forth, which cools down the blood. This cool blood is then carried all around the elephant's body. Amazing, isn't it?

So that's why elephants look like elephants. All of their weird and wonderful features are actually really practical. Their tusks, trunks and ears help them to stay safe, find food and live comfortably in their environment.

Fact Retrieval Questions



FACT RETRIEVAL questions are all about finding information in the text. Think about what you've learned from 'Why Do Elephants Look Like Elephants?', then try these questions.

- 1) Read the paragraph beginning '**Elephants are unique...**'
This paragraph tells us that elephants are

animals in
the 'great
apes' group

similar to
gorillas and
chimpanzees

the largest
land animals
on Earth

the cleverest
animals on
Earth

Circle your answer.

1 mark

- 2) Read the paragraph beginning '**Elephants have special features...**'
Why do giraffes have long necks?

Tick **one** box.

To keep them warm

To help them run faster

To help them blend in

To help them reach food

1 mark

- 3) Why do elephants dig in the ground?

Look at the paragraph beginning
'Elephants use their tusks...'

.....

1 mark

- 4) Read the paragraph beginning '**An elephant's tusks are actually...**'
What are tusks?

horns

teeth

bones

nails

Circle your answer.

1 mark

1 mark



2b

Fact Retrieval Questions

5) According to the text, how long can an elephant's tusks grow to be?

.....

1 mark

6) According to the text, what do elephants use their trunks for? Tick **one** box.

to smell

to dig

to taste

to fight

Look in the section called 'Trunk' if you need some help.

1 mark

7) Read the paragraph beginning 'Elephants live in parts of Africa...'

What do elephants do to cool themselves down? Tick **one** box.

They drink lots of water.

They strip the bark from trees.

They flap their ears back and forth.

They go for a swim in a river.

1 mark

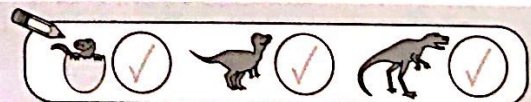
8) Put a tick in the correct box to show whether each statement is true or false.

The first one has been done for you.

	True	False
Elephants live in North Asia.		✓
Elephants' ears are very thick.		
Elephants have lots of blood vessels in their ears.		

1 mark

Reading Raptors can retrieve facts faster than you can say "egg". How did you find these questions?



Inference Questions



Texts don't always make things obvious to the reader; so **INFERENCE** questions are about figuring out hidden meanings. Read through the text carefully, then answer these questions.

- 1) Read the paragraph beginning **'Elephants are unique...'**
Find and copy a phrase which suggests that people aren't exactly sure how intelligent elephants are.

.....

1 mark

- 2) Read the paragraph beginning **'So why do elephants...'**
The writer's description suggests that

Look at the words the writer uses to describe elephants.

elephants don't look like other animals	elephants are similar to many animals	elephants are very smart	elephants are very strong
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Circle your answer.

1 mark

- 3) Read the paragraph beginning **'Elephants use their tusks...'**
This paragraph suggests that elephant tusks are

Think about how elephants use their tusks.

thin	strong	bendy	weak
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Circle your answer.

1 mark

- 4) **'They also use their tusks to fight off other elephants when necessary.'**
What does **'when necessary'** suggest about elephants? Tick **one** box.

They are bad at fighting.

They are good at fighting.

They only fight when they need to.

They enjoy fighting other elephants.

1 mark



2d

Inference Questions

5) How can you tell that elephants have a good sense of smell?

Look at the information you're given in 'Trunk'.

.....

.....

1 mark

6) 'A trunk is more than just a nose, though.'

What do you think the writer means by 'more than just a nose'? Tick **one** box.

Trunks are much bigger than human noses.

Trunks are used for other things apart from smelling.

An elephant's trunk doesn't have many uses.

Elephants have more than one nose.

Think about where this phrase comes in the text.

1 mark

7) Read the paragraph beginning 'Many scientists believe that...'

Which word best matches the writer's description of elephants in this paragraph?

cruel

caring

brave

boring

Circle your answer.

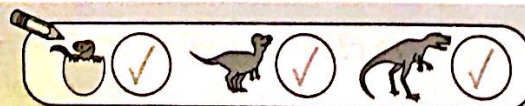
1 mark

8) Put a tick in the correct box to show whether each statement is a fact or an opinion. The first one has been done for you.

	Fact	Opinion
Humans have incisor teeth.	✓	
Elephants use their trunks to lift things.		
The way elephants use their ears is amazing.		

1 mark

Reading Raptors are better at inference questions than any other type of dinosaur. How did you get on?



Word Meaning Questions



It's time for WORD MEANING questions, so get your vocabulary hat on. These questions are all about what individual words in the text mean. See how you get on with them.

- 1) '...each of these features has a very special use.'

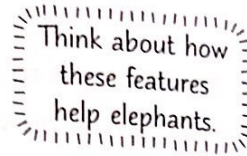
What does the word 'special' mean in this sentence? Tick **one** box.

popular

important

difficult

comfortable



1 mark

- 2) Read the paragraph beginning 'An elephant's tusks are actually...'

Find and copy **one** word which could be replaced with the word 'huge'.

.....

1 mark

- 3) '...elephants use their trunks to comfort other elephants...'

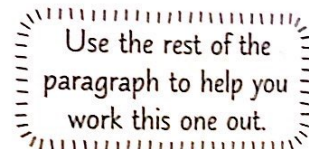
Which word is closest in meaning to the word 'comfort'? Tick **one** box.

cheer up

annoy

fight

tickle



1 mark

- 4) 'All of their weird and wonderful features are actually really practical.'

What does 'practical' mean in this sentence? Circle your answer.

strange

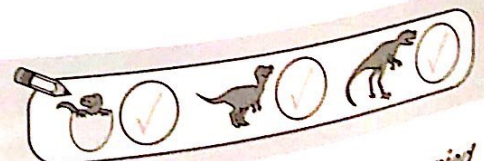
useful

amazing


pointless

1 mark

Reading Raptors answer word meaning questions while standing on their heads. How did you find these?



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2c Summary Questions 

SUMMARY questions get you to think about the main points that the text is making. Have another read over 'Why Do Elephants Look Like Elephants?', then try these questions.

1) What is the main message of the text? Tick **one** box.

- There's no reason why elephants look the way they do.
- Elephants know when other elephants are upset.
- An elephant's most important feature is its trunk.
- Elephants use their special features to help them survive.

1 mark

2) The title of the text is 'Why Do Elephants Look Like Elephants?'. Suggest a different title you could use for the text.

.....

1 mark

2g Language Question 

For LANGUAGE questions, you need to think about why a writer chose to use certain words, and the effect that they have on the reader. Take a look at this question and give it a go.

1) Read the paragraph beginning 'Elephants are unique...' How can you tell that the writer finds elephants impressive?

Think about the words the writer uses to describe elephants.

.....

1 mark

Reading Raptors can juggle six oranges at a time. How did you do with these questions? Tick one.

