

Wildlife Corridors: Reconnecting Fragmented Habitats

COMPREHENSION • VOCABULARY • DISCUSSION

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Reading Passage

Read the passage carefully. Each paragraph is labelled with a letter for easy reference.

- A** Wildlife corridors are essential for maintaining biodiversity in fragmented ecosystems. As urban areas expand and natural habitats diminish, many species find it increasingly challenging to migrate, hunt, and breed effectively. For instance, the construction of highways has divided forests and wetlands, isolating animal populations and making it difficult for them to access essential resources. This isolation can lead to inbreeding and a decline in genetic diversity, which is vital for the health and survival of species. To combat these pressing issues, conservationists are actively working on creating wildlife corridors—designated areas that connect different habitats, allowing animals to safely travel between them and maintain genetic diversity.
- B** One successful example of a wildlife corridor is the one established in Banff National Park in Canada. This corridor includes underpasses and overpasses specifically designed for animals, such as bears and deer, to cross busy roads without facing the dangers of traffic. Since its implementation, wildlife sightings have notably increased, and animal mortality rates due to vehicle collisions have decreased significantly. Such projects not only help preserve wildlife but also promote ecological resilience and stability in the ecosystem. As communities around the world recognize the importance of these corridors for wildlife conservation, more initiatives are emerging globally, aiming to restore connectivity in nature and protect the delicate balance of our ecosystems. These efforts are crucial as they contribute to the overall health of the environment and ensure that future generations can enjoy diverse wildlife.

Vocabulary Glossary

Key words and phrases from the passage. Study them before attempting the exercise below.

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
biodiversity	the variety of different kinds of life in a place	<i>The rainforest is known for its rich biodiversity, with many plants and animals.</i>
fragmented	broken into smaller parts	<i>The old building was fragmented during the storm.</i>
diminish	to become smaller or less important	<i>His interest in the project began to diminish over time.</i>
inbreeding	when animals or people breed with relatives, leading to health problems	<i>Inbreeding can cause health issues in animals like dogs and cats.</i>
genetic diversity	different genes within a group of plants or animals	<i>Genetic diversity helps species adapt to changes in the environment.</i>
resilience	the ability to recover quickly from difficulties	<i>The community showed resilience after the earthquake.</i>
mortality	the number of deaths in a certain group or area	<i>The mortality rate in the city decreased with better healthcare.</i>
ecological	related to the relationships between living things and their environment	<i>The ecological balance in the forest was disturbed by logging.</i>

Vocabulary Exercise — Fill in the Blank

Use one word or phrase from the glossary above to complete each sentence. Each item is used only once. Answers are on the final page.

1. The _____ of the forest provides a home for many unique species.
2. The new road construction has _____ a once large park into smaller pieces.
3. As the day went on, the noise from the traffic began to _____.
4. Without new animals from different areas, _____ can become a serious problem.
5. The _____ of the animal population is important for adapting to changes.
6. After the storm, the town showed great _____ by rebuilding quickly.

Comprehension Questions

These questions are different from the online practice test. Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D). Answers and explanations are on the final page.

Question 1

What is one reason why wildlife corridors are important?

- A. They help animals find food more easily.
- B. They allow animals to cross roads safely.
- C. They increase the size of urban areas.
- D. They reduce the number of highways.

Question 2

What problem does habitat fragmentation cause for animal populations?

- A. Increased food supply
- B. Better breeding opportunities
- C. Isolation and inbreeding
- D. More genetic diversity

Question 3

What is a feature of the wildlife corridor in Banff National Park?

- A. It has tunnels for fish.
- B. It uses fences to keep animals away.
- C. It includes underpasses and overpasses.
- D. It has feeding stations for animals.

Question 4

How have wildlife corridors impacted animal mortality rates?

- A. They have increased mortality rates.
- B. They have no impact on mortality rates.
- C. They have decreased mortality rates.
- D. They make mortality rates difficult to measure.

Question 5

What do conservationists aim to achieve by creating wildlife corridors?

- A. To expand urban development
- B. To increase the number of highways
- C. To restore connectivity in nature
- D. To eliminate all animal predators

Discussion & Writing Prompts

Each prompt references a specific detail from the passage above. Use for classroom discussion or a short written response (150–200 words).

1. The passage discusses the successful wildlife corridor in Banff National Park. Do you think similar corridors would work in your local area, and what factors would influence their success?

2. Paragraph two mentions that wildlife corridors lead to an increase in wildlife sightings. Why do you think this is the case, and what impact might this have on local tourism?

3. The passage states that conservation efforts are crucial for maintaining biodiversity. How important do you think it is for local governments to invest in wildlife corridors, and why?

Answer Key

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1 B

Q2 C

Q3 C

Q4 C

Q5 C

VOCABULARY EXERCISE

FIB1 biodiversity

FIB2 fragmented

FIB3 diminish

FIB4 inbreeding

FIB5 genetic diversity

FIB6 resilience

Comprehension Question Explanations

Why the correct answer is right — and why each wrong option is incorrect.

1. What is one reason why wildlife corridors are important?

✓ B — They allow animals to cross roads safely.

The passage states that corridors allow animals to cross roads safely like in Banff National Park.

✗ A — They help animals find food more easily.

The passage does not mention finding food as a main reason.

✗ C — They increase the size of urban areas.

The passage indicates corridors connect habitats, not increase urban areas.

✗ D — They reduce the number of highways.

The passage discusses corridors, not reducing highways.

2. What problem does habitat fragmentation cause for animal populations?

✓ C — Isolation and inbreeding

The passage explains that fragmentation leads to isolation and inbreeding.

✗ A — Increased food supply

Fragmentation does not increase food supply.

✗ B — Better breeding opportunities

Fragmentation reduces breeding opportunities.

✗ D — More genetic diversity

Fragmentation decreases genetic diversity, not increases it.

3. What is a feature of the wildlife corridor in Banff National Park?

✓ C — It includes underpasses and overpasses.

The passage mentions underpasses and overpasses as part of Banff's corridor.

✗ A — It has tunnels for fish.

The passage does not mention tunnels for fish.

✗ B — It uses fences to keep animals away.

Fences are not discussed in the passage.

✗ D — It has feeding stations for animals.

Feeding stations are not mentioned in the passage.

4. How have wildlife corridors impacted animal mortality rates?

✓ C — They have decreased mortality rates.

The passage states that corridors have decreased mortality rates due to fewer vehicle collisions.

✗ A — They have increased mortality rates.

The passage states mortality rates have decreased, not increased.

✗ B — They have no impact on mortality rates.

The passage indicates a clear impact on mortality rates.

✗ D — They make mortality rates difficult to measure.

The passage shows that corridors have a measurable impact on mortality.

5. What do conservationists aim to achieve by creating wildlife corridors?

✓ C — To restore connectivity in nature

The passage mentions restoration of connectivity as a goal of conservationists.

✗ A — To expand urban development

Conservationists aim to connect habitats, not expand urban areas.

✗ B — To increase the number of highways

The passage does not mention increasing highways.

✗ D — To eliminate all animal predators

Eliminating predators is not discussed in the passage.

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