

READ THE PASSAGE Think about how the groups of people in feudal Japan were alike and different.

Leaders in Feudal Japan

In feudal Japan, from roughly 1200 to 1900, there were two main groups that made up the class system—nobles and peasants. The nobles were made up of the wealthiest and most powerful people. In descending order, the nobles consisted of emperors, shoguns, daimyos, and samurai. People from the higher class could punish people in the lower class for not showing proper respect. It was very important to know about and recognize members of each group.

The emperor was in charge of feudal Japan in name, but he actually held very little military power. While the emperor was the wealthiest person in the country and was the religious leader, he was a figurehead, or false leader. The emperor received money and goods from all of Japan, but he lacked the authority to make military decisions.

The leader of the feudal Japanese military was called the shogun. The shogun had power over all of Japan's warriors, who protected Japan's land and interests. Even though the shogun title was usually passed down in a family line, some shoguns seized power through force.

The daimyos were the next most important group. Daimyos built imposing castles, bought and sold land, and employed vast groups of people to work on their properties. People could easily identify daimyos because of their colorful clothing, which included specific colors determined by rank and wealth.

Even though many modern people are familiar with Japanese samurai, they were at the bottom of the ruling class in feudal Japan. Samurai were powerful warriors who fought for the military. They were cared for by the people of Japan, but they served under the daimyos, shoguns, and emperors.

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. How was the emperor different from other leaders in feudal Japan?</p> <p>(A) He was the most powerful daimyo.</p> <p>(B) He led armies of samurai.</p> <p>(C) He was the country's spiritual leader.</p> <p>(D) He was an important military leader.</p> | <p>3. Shoguns and samurai were alike because both were _____.</p> <p>(A) religious leaders</p> <p>(B) involved in the military</p> <p>(C) given titles through family lines</p> <p>(D) employed by daimyos</p> |
| <p>2. How were the emperors and shoguns alike?</p> <p>(A) They both fought battles in the military.</p> <p>(B) They both built large, imposing castles.</p> <p>(C) They both wore clothes with special colors.</p> <p>(D) They were both members of the noble class.</p> | <p>4. Which group had the most wealth?</p> <p>(A) emperors</p> <p>(B) samurai</p> <p>(C) daimyos</p> <p>(D) shoguns</p> |

STRATEGY PRACTICE If you were a noble in feudal Japan, which group would you most want to be part of? Why?

READ THE PASSAGE Look for details that tell how Chinese and European dragons are alike and different.

Dragons of China and Europe

Dragons appear in fictional stories from around the world, but not all dragons are alike. The dragons that appear in myths from European countries are huge, terrifying, fire-breathing creatures that are shaped like reptiles with wings. They serve as a force of evil and, in famous stories dating from ancient times, must be slain by the heroes of their tales. Legendary heroes such as Hercules, St. George, and Beowulf all fought and killed evil dragons in order to prove their worth.

The dragons that appear in Chinese stories, however, are generally symbols of spiritual power. Similar creatures exist in myths from other countries throughout Asia. Chinese dragons symbolically serve as protection against evil forces in the world. They are shaped like long snakes; they do not have wings or breathe fire. Because of their power, these dragons were historically associated with the emperors of China. The symbol of the dragon is still used today on buildings, on monuments, and even on the clothing of powerful people. During Chinese New Year celebrations, men and boys carry huge dragon puppets and dance with them in parades.

Though the mythical dragons of Asia and Europe are different, they may have a common source. Some experts claim that dragon stories were originally created because ancient people found dinosaur fossils. Because they lacked knowledge about what the dinosaurs were, these people imagined the kind of animal the bones could have come from—huge reptilian dragons.

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- How are Chinese dragons different from European dragons?
 - They have appeared in stories for centuries.
 - They must be slain by a hero.
 - They breathe fire.
 - They are a symbol of spiritual power.
- What do European dragons have that Chinese dragons do not have?
 - wings
 - heads
 - large bodies
 - great power
- According to the passage, European and Chinese dragons both appear _____.
 - in parades
 - on buildings
 - on clothing
 - in stories
- The source of both European and Asian dragons might be _____.
 - symbols
 - snakes
 - dinosaurs
 - monuments

STRATEGY PRACTICE How does the author organize the information about the two kinds of dragons?

READ THE PASSAGE Use clues from the passage to make inferences about the peppered moth.

The Peppered Moth

Natural selection is the process by which one type of animal within a species thrives because of certain characteristics that make it more likely to live than others in its group. The history of the peppered moth is an example of the natural selection process.

In nineteenth-century England, certain types of peppered moths were able to better blend into their surroundings. During that time period, great changes were happening in Great Britain. The Industrial Revolution was part of this change, and with it came air pollution. Natural selection often takes hundreds or even thousands of years to occur. For the peppered moth, this process occurred relatively quickly.

At the beginning of the Industrial Age, most peppered moths in England were light-colored and speckled with black markings, although a few moths had dark-colored wings. Because the light-colored moths blended into the light-colored bark on the trees, they could not be easily seen by birds that would eat them. As the air grew more polluted, however, tree trunks became covered with soot and became darker. The light-colored moths became easy for birds to see against the dark tree trunks. Since the dark-colored moths now had the advantage, their numbers grew. Within 50 years, the peppered moth went from being mostly light-colored to being mostly dark-colored.

In the twentieth century, the air significantly cleared up, and the peppered moth population changed again. As tree trunks lightened due to less soot in the air, light-colored moths once again had an advantage. Their numbers increased as soot levels declined. Depending on their environment, the coloration of the moths helped them to be "naturally selected" to survive.

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. What can you infer about the peppered moth's natural selection process?
 - (A) It was normal for the time period.
 - (B) The length of time was unusual.
 - (C) The soot levels in England did not affect it.
 - (D) This type of color change is typical for moths.
2. Which statement is most likely true?
 - (A) Dark-colored moths were originally easy to see on trees.
 - (B) Both kinds of moths were decreasing in number.
 - (C) The color of the moths was not important.
 - (D) Birds prefer the taste of light-colored moths.
3. Which would mostly likely happen if soot darkened England's trees again?
 - (A) Birds would eat fewer moths.
 - (B) Light-colored moths would become a problem.
 - (C) Moths would not be able to stay alive.
 - (D) The population of dark-colored moths would increase.
4. You can infer from the passage that the birds in England _____.
 - (A) did not like the taste of the pepper moth
 - (B) were always able to find enough moths to eat
 - (C) were dangerously affected by the soot levels
 - (D) changed colors to adapt to their environment

STRATEGY PRACTICE Describe an experience that natural selection reminds you of.

READ THE PASSAGE

Think about how the author organizes the events in the passage.

Stealing *Mona Lisa*

Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* is perhaps the most famous painting in the world. The mysterious smile of the woman in the portrait has intrigued viewers for hundreds of years and has drawn millions of visitors to the museum in which it hangs—the Louvre in Paris, France.

About a hundred years ago, in August of 1911, *Mona Lisa* was stolen from the Louvre. The people of France were distraught, fearing that the painting had been destroyed. The police had few leads in the case and made only one arrest. They believed that Guillaume Apollinaire, a famous poet and art critic, might have stolen the painting, but he was quickly released. While in custody, he tried to blame another famous artist for the theft—Pablo Picasso.

As it turned out, neither man was involved with the infamous theft. Two years after *Mona Lisa* was stolen, a man who claimed to have the painting contacted an Italian art dealer. This man, Vincenzo Peruggia, offered the painting to the art dealer. There was just one condition—the art dealer would have to keep the painting in Italy instead of sending it back to France. Even though the art dealer believed that Peruggia might not have the painting, he contacted the police anyway. When the art dealer met Peruggia, he found that the man's story was true. Peruggia, a former handyman at the Louvre, had stolen the painting. He was quickly arrested and convicted of the crime. *Mona Lisa* survived intact and was returned to the Louvre in Paris, where it is still on display.

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- You can infer that the police quickly released Guillaume Apollinaire because they _____.
 - believed he was guilty
 - did not have enough evidence to charge him with the crime
 - believed Pablo Picasso stole the painting
 - thought if they released him, he would lead them to the real thief
- What can you infer from the fact that the police made only one arrest before Vincenzo Peruggia?
 - The police had few clues to work with.
 - The police were not concerned about the theft.
 - Peruggia was good at hiding from the police.
 - The art dealer kept information from the police.
- Why did the Italian art dealer contact the police?
 - He wanted *Mona Lisa* to stay in Italy.
 - He was working with Apollinaire.
 - He wanted to help return the painting to the Louvre.
 - He wanted to sell the painting to the police.
- Which was most likely Peruggia's main motive for the theft of the painting?
 - to gain money
 - to give it to Italy
 - to become famous
 - to help the Louvre

STRATEGY PRACTICE How does the author use the passage's organization to make the story exciting?

READ THE PASSAGE

Think about how Renaissance diets were alike and different.

Renaissance Diets: Peasant vs. Noble

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a time period known as the Renaissance, the most common food in England for both rich and poor was bread. Grains such as rye and barley were ground and baked to form heavy loaves. People used the bread to hold meat (if they were lucky enough to have meat) and to soak up grease, such as lard, used in cooking. The nobility and peasants alike did not eat many raw vegetables, believing that raw fruits and vegetables could make them sick. They did, however, use some vegetables and herbs, such as onions and garlic, in their cooking.

Members of wealthy families had access to more types of food than the poor did. Once explorers landed in the New World (North and South America), they brought back samples of many fruits and vegetables that were new to Europe, such as melons, oranges, lemons, potatoes, and tomatoes. Nobles then grew these foods in their gardens and served them to guests. Along with these imports, sugar cane from the New World provided the rich with a new sweetener for foods and beverages. They also feasted on many types of meat and fish.

Peasants during the Renaissance had a much less varied diet. They did not eat nearly as much meat (or nearly as much of anything) as their wealthy counterparts. For the most part, they ate bread and simple soups or stews. As with other periods in history, people's economic status had a significant impact on their diet—and their health.

SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. Unlike wealthy members of society, peasants during the Renaissance ate mostly _____.
(A) tomatoes and potatoes
(B) bread, soups, and stews
(C) foods from the New World
(D) roasted meats and fish
2. Because mainly the nobles used sugar, you can conclude that sugar was probably _____.
(A) expensive
(B) simple
(C) nutritious
(D) important
3. Both the rich and the poor ate a lot of _____.
(A) fruits
(B) vegetables
(C) bread
(D) meats
4. What can you infer about the foods of the nobility during the Renaissance?
(A) People took great pride in foods from their homeland.
(B) The foods that people ate were all the same.
(C) Simple foods were highly valued.
(D) Having foods from the New World showed their status.

STRATEGY PRACTICE

Do you think the diets of wealthy and poor people are as different today as they were during the Renaissance? Explain.
