

Name _____

Hibernate or Celebrate?

Have you ever heard about animals that sleep for months at a time? It might sound like the ultimate nap, but it's actually a remarkable survival strategy known as hibernation. Let's explore why some animals choose to hibernate and how it helps them brave the coldest months of the year.



Winter can be a tough time for animals. The cold weather makes it hard to find food, and some animals can't handle the freezing temperatures. This is where hibernation comes into play.

Hibernation is like an extended, deep sleep that allows animals to conserve energy and survive when food is scarce. During hibernation, an animal's body temperature drops significantly, and its heart rate and breathing slow down. This helps them use less energy.

Many animals hibernate, but the types of animals that do might surprise you. Bears, groundhogs, and bats are some of the most famous hibernators. But even some tiny creatures, like certain frogs and insects, go into a state of hibernation.

Before hibernation begins, animals often eat a lot to build up fat reserves. This fat serves as their energy supply during the long sleep. Some animals also find safe and cozy places to hibernate, like burrows, caves, or nests, to shield them from the cold.

Hibernation isn't just about staying warm; it also helps animals avoid predators and conserve precious energy. When spring arrives and the weather warms up, hibernating animals wake up and emerge, ready to find food, mate, and raise their young.

Hibernation isn't the only way animals cope with extreme conditions. Some animals, like certain desert creatures, go into a state called estivation to survive scorching heat and drought. Others enter a temporary state called torpor, which is similar to hibernation but lasts for shorter periods.

The ability to hibernate or enter states like estivation and torpor is truly remarkable. It's a fascinating example of how animals have adapted to the challenges of their environments, ensuring their species' survival.

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Reading Comprehension Questions



1. What is hibernation, and why do some animals do it?

- A) It's a deep sleep that helps animals conserve energy during cold months when food is scarce.
- B) It's a long vacation for animals during the winter.
- C) It's a way for animals to celebrate the winter season.
- D) It's a type of migration birds do.

2. Why is winter challenging for animals?

- A) Because it's a time for animals to have fun in the snow.
- B) Because the cold weather makes it hard to find food, and some animals can't handle freezing temperatures.
- C) Because animals like to sleep during winter.
- D) Because animals migrate to warmer places during winter.

3. Which of the following animals is NOT mentioned as a hibernator in the passage?

- A) Bears
- B) Groundhogs
- C) Frogs
- D) Bats

4. What do animals do before hibernation to prepare for the long sleep?

- A) They find a cozy place to hibernate.
- B) They build nests.
- C) They eat a lot to build up fat reserves.
- D) They go on long journeys.

5. What is estivation, and why do some animals use it?

- A) It's a state similar to hibernation that helps animals conserve energy during the cold months.
- B) It's a celebration of the arrival of spring.
- C) It's a type of migration birds do.
- D) It's a state used by desert animals to survive scorching heat and drought.