

NEWS BREAK

Wednesday's News Break selects an article from Monday, August 24, 2015 of The Seattle Times e-Edition for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected story and answer the attached study questions.

Zookeepers: Odds are good for twin pandas (Main News, page A2)

Pre-Reading and Vocabulary

1. Before you read this article, as a class discuss what you think this story will be about. Write down any keywords from the title, which you used to make your predictions. Also discuss what clues the photo accompanying the article might give you.

2. **Vocabulary: Match the words or phrases to the numbered definitions below.**

- A. aggressive
- B. captivity
- C. critical
- D. endangered
- E. gender
- F. incubator
- G. left to their own devices
- H. in residence
- I. serum
- J. survival rate
- K. swap
- L. technique
- M. tradition
- N. warily
- O. without incident

- 1. extremely important
- 2. living in a particular place at a particular time
- 3. the stories, beliefs, etc., that have been part of the culture of a group of people for a long time
- 4. a piece of equipment in which very weak or sick babies are placed for special care and protection after their birth
- 5. to replace (something) with something else
- 6. used to describe a type of animal or plant that has become very rare and that could die out completely
- 7. the percentage of people or animals in a study or group who are alive for a given period of time, after a diagnosis, birth, etc.
- 8. without any unexpected trouble
- 9. the state of being kept in a place (such as a prison or a cage) and not being able to leave or be free
- 10. a way of doing something by using special knowledge or skill
- 11. the state of being male or female
- 12. the part of blood that is like water and that contains substances (called antibodies) that fight disease

13. allowed to do what you want or what you are able to do without being controlled or helped by anyone
14. ready and willing to fight, argue, etc.
15. not having or showing complete trust in someone or something that could be dangerous or cause trouble

Comprehension

1. Why is the National Zoo using the technique of swapping out the cubs? (Be as specific as possible)
2. When a cub is not nursing and bonding with its mother, where is it kept?
3. According to the article, by late Sunday afternoon how many times had the twin cubs traded places without incident?
4. What have the cubs done when being taken away from their mother that is a sign that they are strong and healthy?
5. What color are the cubs?
6. According to the article, the second cub was given a serum draw previously from its mother's blood. Why was the second cub given a serum?
7. Zoo officials said it would be three or four weeks before the cubs' _____ are known.
(Fill in the blank)
8. Two decades ago, the survival rate for panda cubs was under 20 percent. Now the survival rate is more than _____ percent. (Multiple Choice)
 - a) 80
 - b) 90
 - c) 95
 - d) None of the above
9. Why won't the new cubs be named until they are 100 days old?
10. More panda cubs born in the Washington, D.C. have survived than died – **true or false?**

Additional Activities

1. **Using your school/local library or the internet, research to find answers to the following:**
 - A) What is the panda's natural habitat?
 - B) On average how much does a panda weigh and how tall are they?
 - C) What is their average life span?
 - D) What do pandas eat?
 - E) The panda is listed as an endangered species. How many pandas are left in the wild? How many are in zoos?
2. **Answer the following questions about the article you just read:**
 - A. Who or what is this article about?
 - B. Why do you think this article is important?
 - C. What is the most important or interesting fact you learned from this article?

News Break is posted to the Web on Monday and Wednesday. Please share the NIE News Break program with other teachers. To sign-up for the electronic edition of the newspaper please call

Answer Key NEWS BREAK — Wednesday, August 26, 2015

Answer Key to Vocabulary

- A. 14
- B. 9
- C. 1
- D. 6
- E. 11
- F. 4
- G. 13
- H. 2
- I. 12
- J. 7
- K. 5
- L. 10
- M. 3
- N. 15
- O. 8

Answer Key to Comprehension Questions

1. They are using the swapping technique because pandas won't usually nurse twins if left to their own devices. This gives the cubs a better chance of survival because they each have time to nurse and bond with their mother. **(Answers may vary)**
2. The cub is kept in an incubator.
3. They had traded places three times without incident.
4. They have squealed loudly.
5. They are pink in color.
6. The second cub was given a serum because it hadn't gotten a chance to nurse.
7. genders
8. a) 80
9. They won't be named until they are 100 days old because it is a Chinese tradition.
10. False, more have died.